Music Week

March 2023

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GABRIELS

ROBIN MILLAR

STELLAR SONGS

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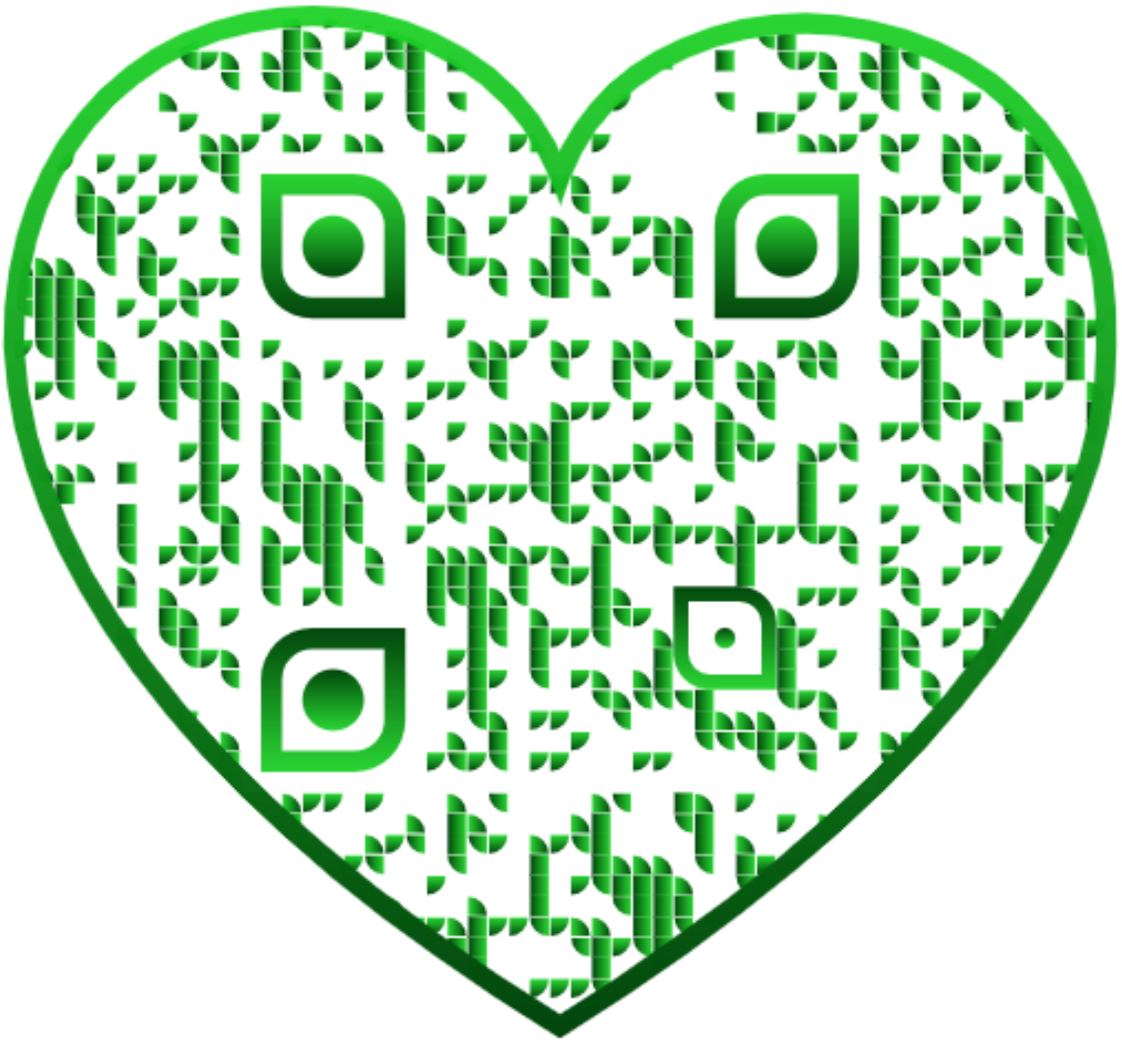
DIGITAL EDITION

"I refuse to let people put me into a mould!"

PINK

HOW A POP RENEGADE TOOK OVER THE WORLD



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Welcome to

Music Week...

True North

Speaking as a proud Northerner, it is all but baked into my DNA to remind people that, while the core of the UK music industry is predominantly based in London, it has always relied on musicians and executives who live outside of the capital to help it thrive. Don't worry, I'm not going to extol the power of regional scenes ad nauseam here (I just deleted that whole tome-length section, FYI). I do, however, want to dwell on a certain deficit related to it.

A question: how often does the London-based industry reach out in a meaningful way to regional hotspots for reasons other than signing its musical talent? There are, assuredly, some good examples, and each one warms my cold dead heart. The amazing team at Cre8ing Vision hosted the first ever regional incarnation of its Ultimate Seminar in 2021, bringing top executives to Liverpool to share their knowledge with the next generation. Then there's the MOBO Awards, taking the best of Black music to the likes of Coventry, Leeds and Glasgow in recent years. These are two brilliant examples of meaningful regional outreach, it's just a shame that instances such as these are still relatively few and far between.

All of this explains why I think Universal's announcement in January that EMI is to open a regional imprint christened EMI North in Leeds was greeted with so much acclaim. Based in Duke Studios and led by Clive Cawley, it will be "dedicated to working with the very best musical talent in the North of England and providing opportunities for young people to work in the industry." To this end, they have already partnered with Leeds' Clue Records and Come Play With Me – the latter being the winners of The Company Award, Diversity In The Workplace, at Music Week's Women In Music Awards 2022.

There is a crucial distinction here. EMI North is not just an A&R exercise, it's also focused on fostering behind-the-scenes talent, too. Of course, for years there have been amazing independent labels doing this around the UK, but the more opportunities for people from different areas of the country to be able to have an entry point into music the better, if you ask me. The idea that the next generation could thrive in the business without having to say bye to their families and embark upon a career pilgrimage to London is one that gives me real hope. Some of the most game-changing musical minds – be they presidential, managerial or otherwise – have been cultivated far outside of the M25. How many more influential people might be unleashed if others follow suit?

Maybe Atlantic Aberystwyth, Polydor Preston and RCA Rotherham are too far-fetched. Then again, Leeds is now home to EMI, and Tileyard North is go in Wakefield. Who knows where we go from here?

George Garner, Head Of Content

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

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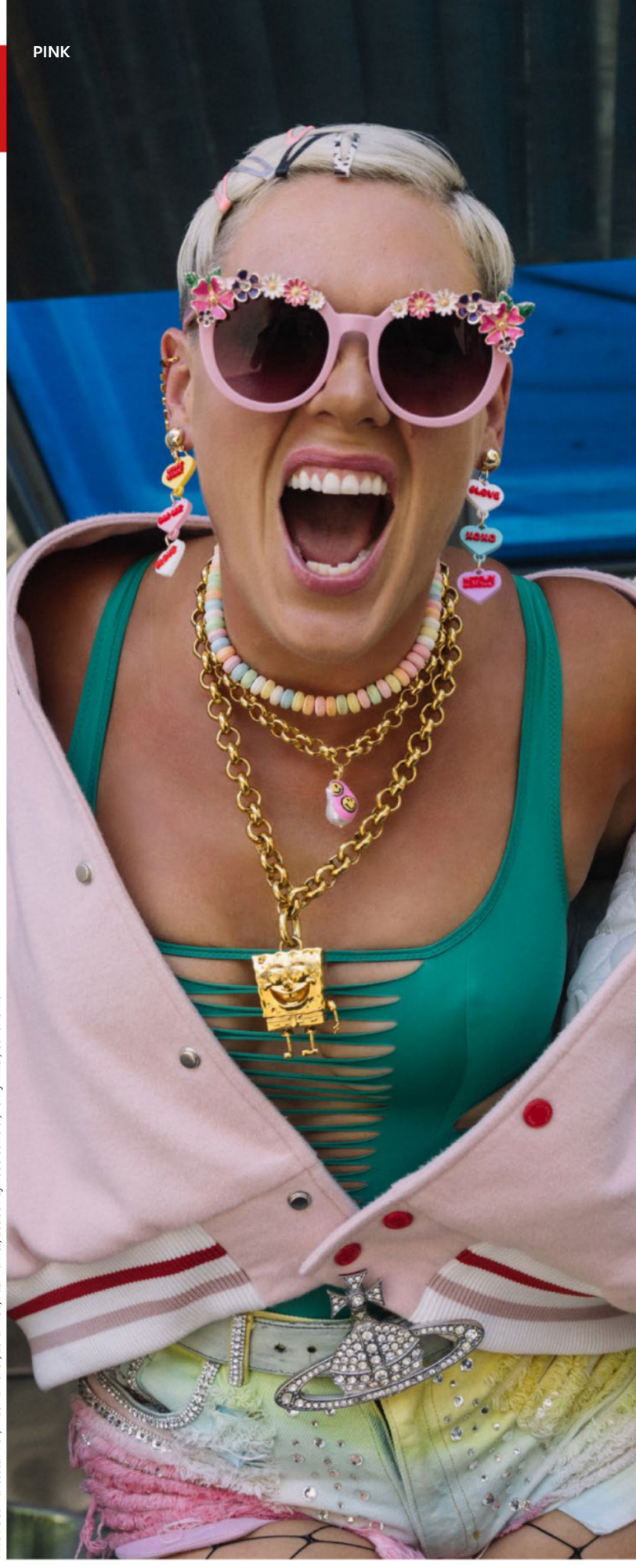

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THE BIG STORY

Escape plan: Raye's artist services team on the ascent of a 'global superstar'

Following a No.1 with Escapism and the release of Raye's long-awaited debut LP, Human Re Sources and The Orchard reveal their hopes for the UK artist

— BY ANDRE PAINE —

Raye's services and distribution team have spoken about fulfilling her vision as an independent artist with ambitions for an international breakthrough.

The UK singer and songwriter has just released her debut album, My 21st Century Blues, following her first ever UK No.1 with Escapism (Feat 070 Shake) last month.

Raye's campaign marks her return under a new distribution partnership with LA-based Human Re Sources, which is part of Sony Music's artist & label services operation The Orchard.

"She A&R'd the project herself, the heavy lifting was done," said J Erving, Human Re Sources founder and EVP, creative development at Sony Music. "It was about finding a distribution partner and creating a scenario where she could be the captain of the ship and have support on the back end, but with her really driving it. This is 100% Raye's vision."

Escapism went Top 5 in multiple territories, including No.1 in the UK (390,376 sales – Official Charts Company).

The Orchard's campaign, aligned throughout its offices around the world, has now shifted to building consumption of all the tracks on My 21st Century Blues. For a performance on BBC One's Graham Norton Show last month, Raye performed The Thrill Is Gone rather than her chart-topping single.

"It's not just about delivering [Escapism] as a huge hit single," said UK MD Ian Dutt. "It's about delivering Raye as a global superstar, which she was always meant to be. [The No.1] was an amazing moment for us and we're delighted for Raye, but it's about what we do over the next 12 months. And it's important to stress that it's very much a global strategy."

Meanwhile, there is an increasing US focus for Escapism, including the cover of Spotify's Today's Top Hits playlist.

"The US is taking the lead in terms of streaming [of Escapism], it's got really good playlist pick-up and the radio story is starting to shape up in the US," said Erving.

Following a brief UK tour next month, including a Roundhouse date, Raye will play five sold-out US club shows.

"I wish we could make the venues bigger, the demand is crazy," said Erving. "But she'll be back to do bigger rooms. I've been in the music business for over 20 years, and she is one of the most dynamic live performers I've ever seen."

Although established as a hitmaker, with 18 Top 75 entries prior to Escapism, Raye had voiced her frustration at not being able to release a debut LP. She parted ways with Polydor in 2021, who said the decision was "amicable and mutual".

Dutt underlined The Orchard's working partnership with Raye, who is managed by her father Paul Keen and mother Sarah Keen, as well as day-to-day manager Tia Ferguson.

"The most important thing was to build an environment around Raye that was empathetic, inclusive and creative," said Dutt. "It gave her the freedom and confidence to make the decisions she wanted to make."

Raye has made all the singles choices for the campaign. The ballad Ice Cream Man is the next focus track from the album.

"It is another phenomenal piece of songwriting," said Dutt. "It is in a very different lane to Escapism so the two tracks can happily live side by side."

"These records are a culmination of Raye's experiences," said Erving. "Ice Cream Man is a very vulnerable record, it is reflective and the hook on that song is infectious. I want young women to hear that record and feel empowered."

While the services company has had chart-topping albums, Escapism is The Orchard's first ever UK No.1 single.

"It underlines that with the right artist and the right song, we can compete in this field," said Dutt.

The single went viral on TikTok, including a sped-up version that's featured in 473,000 creator videos. In total, Escapism has inspired more than a million TikTok creations and two billion TikTok views of videos featuring the song.

"We've been very active in terms of monitoring, putting the right marketing in place and looking at various versions," said Anette Collins, senior director, international artist services. "The sped-up version on TikTok was massive."

Erving highlighted the crucial role of Raye's songwriting in the impact of Escapism, which has amassed more than 135 million Spotify streams.

"The virality on TikTok was around a lyric," he said. "That is a testament to Raye and her songwriting. There's so much connectivity between what she is saying and singing about, and how young people are feeling and thinking."

The UK star teamed up with the US-based Human Re Sources after Erving was alerted to Raye and her album by an A&R.

"We looked at Raye like a new artist, we didn't approach this as a relaunch," he said. "It was very little to do with the track record, I just heard an amazing body of work. She is really smart, really driven, super-talented. I heard a global superstar when I listened to this project."

Raye is signed to Warner Chappell for publishing alongside her partnership with Human Re Sources and The Orchard.

The Sony Music team are now working to build Raye as an international star on her own terms.

"I'd love to see her as a long-term career album artist that can have hit records at the same time," said Dutt. "What we're proving now is that she can deliver as part of an album campaign, so I think the future for Raye is phenomenal."

"She's already working on more music," said Erving. "Raye is just getting started. She could be as big as any artist in the world, she checks all of the boxes."

"Raye is one of the most dynamic performers I've ever seen"

J Erving, Human Re Sources

Raye of light: *Raye released her debut LP My 21st Century Blues via an artist services deal*

PHOTO: Sebastian Kapfhammer

MUSIC RIGHTS

Go Figura: Former BMG leader enters booming rights market

With $500m of capital and the first big catalogue deals confirmed, Alexi Cory-Smith reveals her creative and commercial vision for Bella Figura Music

BY ANDRE PAINE

PHOTO: Dolly Clew

Rights move: *Bella Figura Music founder and CEO Alexi Cory-Smith*

Alexi Cory-Smith has spoken exclusively to *Music Week* about the vision and financial muscle behind her new music rights company.

The former BMG UK repertoire & marketing president is CEO of Bella Figura Music, which she co-founded with BMG colleague Neelesh Prabhu, who heads up the start-up's investment team.

Bella Figura has private equity backing from Freshstream. It has so far acquired long-term interests in catalogues by David Gray and Guy Chambers – artists that Cory-Smith worked with at BMG – and DJ/producer R3hab, among others.

The experienced executive had a successful spell at BMG, which she joined in 2011 and then rose to the top of the UK business as it achieved significant growth.

"When I left BMG, it just felt like the right time to have my own business," Cory-Smith told *Music Week*. "I just thought, 'I want to be my own boss, I want to be an entrepreneur.'"

With the booming catalogue market in recent years, Cory-Smith saw a business opportunity.

"I use an analogy of a Ferrari garage," she explained. "We're a high net worth, boutique place for high performance artists. Ferraris are the best and they need really great mechanics to manage them and look after them."

Amid increasing consolidation in recent years, including the sale of Songs Music Publishing, Downtown and the private equity acquisition of Kobalt, Cory-Smith identified a niche for a nimble rights operation with industry expertise.

"I felt there was a gap for a really well-funded, independent player to come in and take a boutique position, and that's the aim," she said. "So it's then about building it and applying a boutique approach, but with a big focus around metadata, the copyright and managing the assets we own."

London-based private equity management firm Freshstream has committed to deploying $500 million for Bella Figura investments up to 2027.

Cory-Smith said that the Bella Figura founders' expertise made them a strong investment.

"Music as an asset class is an absolutely compelling and good place to put your money, but you need people who know what they're doing to manage it for you," she said. "I would like Bella Figura to grow into one of the significant independent players in the market."

So far, $52 million has been invested in catalogues covering both music publishing and master recordings. The company expects to deploy the funds in tranches of around $115 million.

"We're really flexible in how we do our deals," said Cory-Smith. "[But] we want hands-on control, so we want the copyright, we're not really buying passive income streams. Our view is we want to acquire rights which we can manage ourselves and increase the value effectively."

> *"Bella Figura is a boutique place for high perfomance artists"*
>
> **Alexi Cory-Smith**
> **Bella Figura Music**

Following its initial music rights deals, Bella Figura is working with firms including Fuga and AWAL to help develop catalogues in which it has a long-term interest.

The company's first big publishing deal is with the catalogue of songwriter and Robbie Williams collaborator Guy Chambers.

"We talked a lot about what we could do with the songs," said Cory-Smith. "We want to make new versions of some titles. There are some unknown gems, and we just got engaged in this creative conversation very quickly."

The deal with David Gray is for master recordings. Bella Figura is hiring a catalogue manager to work alongside his management.

"He's a really active artist," said Cory-Smith. "It's a big catalogue of work, and he's at a really interesting point in his career.

Chambers music: *Guy Chambers*

"We will work very closely with Mick Management and we can join forces on sync, YouTube and physical. For David, I think that was a winning factor, but also that we were able to be very flexible about how the deal was structured."

Gray is also part of a portfolio of recordings acquired from Kobalt (KMC), for which AWAL continues to provide distribution. It includes works by Placebo, The Wombats, HIM, Missy Higgins, Dashboard Confessional and Lil Peep.

Cory-Smith is actively looking at further acquisitions, particularly where the artist or songwriter sees opportunities to build their catalogue in partnership with Bella Figura.

"We're looking at the US market, the Latin American market and the French market," said Cory-Smith. "But it all boils down to, 'Is it the right quality and is there artist engagement?'"

The firm aims to be seen as creative, well funded and "really good to do business with".

Cory-Smith is also eyeing a US expansion.

"I would like to buy a business in America, it would be good to have boots on the ground in the US," she said.

Alongside its own copyright administration head, Bella Figura works with service partner Exploration on metadata clean-up. Global royalty collections are made through SACEM and via strategic partners in key markets.

It will have 12 staff this year, including a sync team, and is set to grow to 22 by 2027.

"We're building the company, there's a young team," said Cory-Smith. "We're a start-up, so you have to have an entrepreneurial spirit if you join us – and you've got to love music."

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FOR THE RECORD

THE BIG TALENT

Sony Music Group has expanded its Beyond The Instrument initiative, which aims to accelerate equity and access to music technology education. The programme launched in the UK in partnership with Harris Academy Greenwich, including a discussion featuring Cat Burns (*pictured*). "I look forward to seeing what these students create in the future on their paths to becoming incredible music professionals," said Towalame Austin, EVP, philanthropy & social impact, Sony Music Group.

THE BIG DEAL

Hipgnosis Song Management has signed a deal for Justin Bieber's catalogue reportedly worth more than $200 million. Hipgnosis acquired Bieber's 100% interest in his publishing copyrights (including the writer's share of performance), master recordings and neighbouring rights for the entire back catalogue, comprising over 290 titles. Universal Music Group continues to own the recordings on the label side and UMPG continues to administer the publishing.

PHOTO: Carsten Windhorst

THE BIG LABEL

Lucy Dann has been appointed MD at EMI Records.

Dann (*pictured far left with, L-R, Jo Charrington and Rebecca Allen*) joins the UK's market-leading label following 10 years at Polydor, with the last three served as co-marketing director.

In her new role, Dann will oversee campaigns across the roster, leading the marketing, creative and promotions teams.

EMI co-presidents Rebecca Allen and Jo Charrington said: "Lucy Dann is an exceptional music executive who we have both admired and wanted to work with for a very long time. Respected across the wider business by managers, artists and colleagues, Lucy will bring fresh determination, leadership and ambition to our label and its artists, helping to further drive EMI's successes around the world."

Lucy Dann said: "I am absolutely delighted to be working with Becky and Jo, two people I have admired throughout my whole career. The EMI team are excellent, and I can't wait to see where we take EMI over the next few years and more, shaping a label that aligns and grows with the constant evolution of music and technology."

Dann has played a key part in Polydor's success in recent years, including the UK breakthrough of Billie Eilish. She worked on campaigns for Maroon 5, Selena Gomez, Demi Lovato, Jonas Brothers, J Cole, The Who, Elbow and The 1975.

Her appointment follows the recent launch of EMI North, based in Leeds, which will be led by Clive Cawley as president.

THE BIG MOVE

Thomas Coesfeld (*pictured*) has been appointed CEO of BMG. As part of a long-term succession plan, he will succeed Hartwig Masuch with effect from 2024. Coesfeld has served as CFO since April 2021. Hartwig Masuch, who has built the company as CEO since 2008, will remain associated with parent company Bertelsmann in an advisory capacity. "After 32 years at Bertelsmann and more than 14 years at BMG, now is the right time for me to hand over the reins to a new generation," he said.

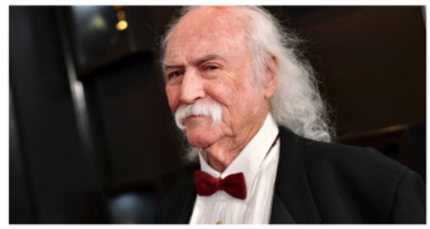

PHOTO: Emma McIntyre, Getty

THE BIG TRIBUTE

BMG has paid tribute to David Crosby, who has died aged 81. The music legend was a BMG recording artist and publishing client, and the subject of their 2019 film David Crosby: Remember My Name. After co-founding The Byrds in 1964, he went on to form Crosby, Stills & Nash in 1968. He was a two-time inductee into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame. BMG said that he was "one of the all-time greats, we remember David through his incredible music, poignant words and electric performances".

TAKE A BOW

Rap Game Awful
Peak Chart Position: No.4
Label: Polydor

TEAM Clavish

Management: Rif Jung (MITB Ents), Marlon Boakye
A&R: Piers Haynes (Polydor)
Marketing: Jade Bradshaw/Daniel Mburu (Polydor)
Digital Marketing: Wardah Sempa/Chloe Sintim (Polydor)
Streaming: Will Rowe-Parr/Ajani Caro (Polydor)
Publicity: Stephanie Duncan-Bosu/Tahirah Thomas (Polydor)
Radio: Amika Ezer/Laurence Pinkus (Polydor)
TV: Claire Close/Jessica Spaine (Polydor)
Video: Emily Jeffrey (Polydor)
Sales/D2C: Eve Gee (Polydor)
Live Agent: Craig D'Souza (WME)

Game on: Clavish

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FLO *(winner)*
Cat Burns
Nia Archives

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1. **FLO** *(winner)*
2. **Fred again..**
3. **Nia Archives**
4. **Cat Burns**

Also on the longlist:
Biig Piig
piri & tommy

WASSERMAN MUSIC

SPOTLIGHT

SHINING A LIGHT ON MUSIC'S BIGGEST NAMES

"Majors and independents can work together, rather than it having to be us versus them"

SILVIA MONTELLO, AIM

Silvia Montello, CEO, AIM

Silvia Montello has just taken over as chief exec of the **Association Of Independent Music** (**AIM**). Here, the former boss of the **Association For Electronic Music** shares her agenda, from helping labels seize opportunities in an evolving market to backing the dance revival...

Congratulations on your appointment, what's your vision for AIM in 2023?
"We want to continue the great work that's been done but also make sure that we're ahead of the curve in terms of where the industry is going, and to make sure that we're a really strong voice on those issues where we need to fight for our rights-holders and creators. As part of that, I'm really committed to continuing to educate and support [labels and artists]. Our industry moves incredibly quickly. So it's making sure that, whether it's self-releasing artists or bigger and more established labels, everyone's up to speed with what those opportunities are. I also want to make sure that all genres are well-represented and supported, and that we continue the great work on diversity, equity and inclusion which is something that's really close to my heart and I feel very passionately about."

With the growth of catalogue consumption, what are the opportunities there for indies?
"For those labels that have rich catalogues, it's definitely an opportunity. We know that just under 70% of streaming comes from tracks that are four years old or more. So that can be a really good financial support, and that regular streaming income can then help [fund] newer artists. Finding ways to exploit the other revenue streams that catalogue can bring outside of streaming is incredibly important financially, to give that bedrock for what you're doing in terms of investing in new talent."

But there are challenges for the sector with vinyl production – what can be done about it?
"It's about managing it as best as possible. Vinyl capacity is a global issue and it's from every part of the production chain. So it's certainly a challenge for the independents trying to make sure they get enough slots within the vinyl plants. However, a lot of independents have been using split releases strategically for their campaigns. They have actually been finding that it's something that is a useful strategy for them, because the vinyl coming later than the digital release can give that extra bite at the cherry. Being innovative and looking at how you can use the different timings to your advantage is something that independents have been doing for a couple of years now."

Do you have any concerns about the market power of the major label groups?
"If you look back over the decades, it's obvious that the majors have the balance of power – there's nothing new in that. Where I think majors and independents can work together is across the entire ecosystem, rather than it having to be us versus them. There is much more recognition now from the major labels that, actually, the independent sector has an important part to play in nurturing and developing talent, some of which will upstream to the majors, and some of which will continue to be successful within its independent state. Independent music has been growing in market share, and it can continue to do that because of the [sector's] innovation and creativity."

So you can be considered an independent artist if you're distributed by a major?
"Absolutely. The proliferation of self-releasing artists who are their own label and create their own team has really exploded in the last five years. The importance is really the nature of the deal and the control that artists have over their output, ownership and creative vision. [Just] because you are going through the Warner Music or Universal Music systems, it doesn't mean that you're not necessarily independent anymore."

Finally, how important do you think indies have been to the dance music revival?
"The UK is really lucky that we have amazing independent dance labels like Defected and Hospital Records. One of the fantastic things about it is that you can create a community around a genre and keep going back with both catalogue and new releases, building lifetime careers for DJs, producers and artists. So I see this as a really interesting and important area for independents. It's something that I'm going to continue to support as much as possible."

WORDS: Andre Paine **PHOTO:** AIM

START ME UP THE NEW COMPANIES DRIVING MUSIC'S FUTURE

***AIMS high:** AIMS API co-founder Einar Helde*

NAME: AIMS API
TECH: AI MUSIC SEARCH

AI and music are becoming an increasingly powerful partnership in the industry.

AIMS API is one of the key players establishing a presence with clients including Universal Production Music, Warner Chappell Production Music, Partisan Records, Hipgnosis, Extreme Music, BMG Production Music and more.

The tech start-up specialises in using artificial intelligence to power music search and provide auto-tagging solutions, which can improve efficiency for playlist curators and music supervisors.

"Our goal was to make searching through large music catalogues more intuitive and efficient by using similarity instead of keywords and browsing functions," Einar Helde, co-founder and head of business development, tells *Music Week*.

The AIMS Similarity Search function uses machine learning to enable partners to find music in their catalogues that has a similar feel to a search reference track. The AI analyses the characteristics of the audio and brings back the best song match.

"We're making it possible for people to discover the hidden gems of entire catalogues," says Helde.

He is confident that their proprietary technology has an edge when it comes to sourcing the right song from ever-expanding catalogues.

"We are experts in the complexities of music search and its impact on the industry," says Helde. "We pride ourselves on being a research-led tech company. We've developed products based on our experience in the music industry, and with a truly global team made up of music and TV industry professionals, we understand the needs and wants of our customers like no one else."

"Our goal is to revolutionise the way people search for music"
EINAR HELDE, AIMS API

With a team of 20, who have publishing and sync backgrounds, AIMS API has established itself in Prague, Copenhagen, Berlin, the US and London. Katie Thompson was recently appointed as UK marketing manager.

Developments include automating playlist creation and curation, as well as discovery and recommendation features.

"Our goal is to revolutionise the way people search for and discover music, whether they're professionals or consumers," says Helde.

IN POD WE TRUST INSIDE THE BEST MUSIC PODCASTS

THIS MONTH: 101 PART TIME JOBS

Hosted by: Giles Bidder
Contact: giles@mightymoonmedia.com

Why was the idea of looking at the side hustles of musicians in a podcast one that appealed to you?
"Hearing about musicians' other jobs isn't new but we don't often hear deeper, personal stories. When my old band got signed, released an album and got a booking agent, I thought, 'This is it – music is going to be my life now'. We did support tours and had a small fanbase but still, I worked around 15 jobs in the space of 10 months. I cleaned offices, disposed of Christmas trees and was a life drawing model. I was terrible at all of them and my head was all over the place; my band was going better than I'd ever anticipated but equally I was an unskilled worker finding it hard to hold down any job due to touring. There are lots of similar stories for people we wouldn't expect and there's been a shift of focus on transparency within music. Artists want to talk about their reality, and we want to hear about it."

"Artists want to talk about their reality, and we want to hear about it"
Giles Bidder

So what are some of the most surprising side-jobs you've uncovered?
"I've done episodes with Self Esteem, Yard Act and Jamz Supernova – all of whom have brilliant stories of personal resilience. Emerging artists like Prima Queen, Scott Lavene and Cheap Teeth also have fascinating tales; working at DIY venues, living in cars, working at call centres selling breast enlargements and solar panels. My approach is to treat everyone the same: they're all humans working really hard to make their vision a reality. I'll interview the big artists who are on a campaign trail of 6 Music and Later... With Jools Holland, but I'm equally interested in the band who just did a 30-date tour and the biggest crowd was 15. If they're good, they're good. And they'll probably have some good stories."

In terms of establishing a healthy creative and work-life balance, what's the best advice that's been served up so far?
"The best way to balance what you love with what you need is to look at the resources that are available to you and know that no one else is going to work it out for you. It's important to look after yourself, be smart and look ahead to what's down the road. Tours last a few weeks or months – then what? It's helpful talking to others in a similar position and asking for advice. Living well shouldn't be a secret game."

Finally, what's next for 101 Part Time Jobs?
"The podcast has been steadily growing since 2020, when I pulled my finger out and started releasing weekly episodes. My listeners catch on when there's a guest they're a big fan of, and quite a few of them tend to stick around. As producer and host, 101 Part Time Jobs has given me a lot of freedom in my line of questioning, and also given me a taste of interviewing bands in a podcast/radio format – which is something I'm gearing myself towards more. I've signed a deal with Auddy, who are a podcast network bringing together lots of brilliant shows and acquiring ad revenue. I'm also working on a book featuring stories from Amyl And The Sniffers, King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard, Ezra Furman and loads more. I'll be releasing it to coincide with my 200th episode in May."

***Bidder for glory:** Giles Bidder (middle, top) with Kneecap*

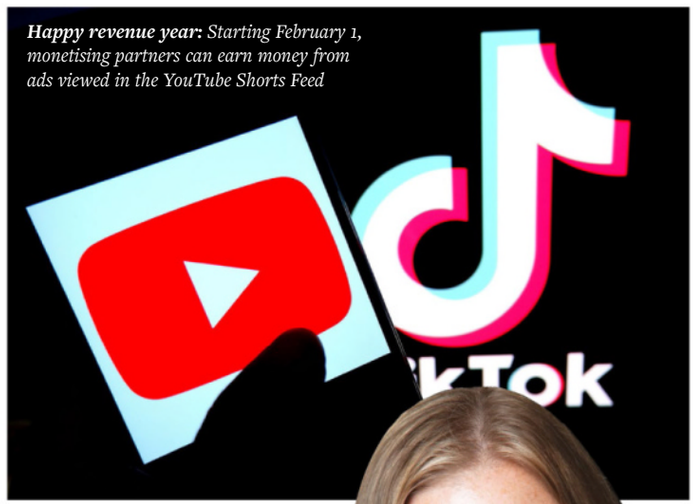
Photo: Glen Bollard

DIGITAL DISCOURSE

Deviate Digital CEO Sammy Andrews guides you through the ever-changing tech world...

THIS MONTH:

FAIR PAY ALL ROUND



Happy revenue year: *Starting February 1, monetising partners can earn money from ads viewed in the YouTube Shorts Feed*

Dear readers, we are now somehow beyond a full month into 2023 and I wanted to take a moment to have a look at some of the subjects that I think will have industry tongues wagging (and others frothing at the mouth) this year.

CREATOR WARS BEGIN

It's been a difficult 12 months for many technology companies globally with tumbling share prices and mass layoffs, but social platforms have started with refreshed approaches to their creator acquisition. At times this has involved hard cash in exchange for a few native posts, but for YouTube, creators now recieve a share of advertising revenue from YouTube Shorts.

YouTube have said that, by adding together revenue from adverts running between Shorts, this new monetisation plan will be used to both "reward creators and help cover costs of music licensing".

If a monetising creator uploads a Short without any music, all of the revenue associated with the video's views goes into the Creator Pool. Alternatively, if a monetising creator uploads a Short that features music, revenue received from the video's views will be split fairly between the Creator Pool and the music partners involved, dependent on the number of tracks used.

"For example, if a monetising creator uploads a Short with one track, half of the revenue associated with its views would be allocated to the Creator Pool, and the other half used to cover the costs of music licensing," YouTube have explained. "If the Short features two musical tracks, one third of the revenue associated with its views would be allocated to the Creator Pool, and the other two thirds used to cover the costs of music licensing."

The question is: will TikTok follow suit? TikTok currently pays creators through its Creator Fund, a pool of $200 million which was launched back in 2021 with a promise to reach $1 billion in the next three years. That might sound like a lot of money, but if you compare it to YouTube who claim to have paid creators over $30 billion in advertising revenue over the last three years, it's most certainly not. Monetising short-form content has always posed a few questions, as you can't very well just slot a 10-second advert into a 30-second video. However, it has become clear that YouTube are leading the charge with advertisement revenue splits. Expect land grabs galore in 2023.

"The industry must be sure to tread carefully as we explore new ways to drive the business forward"

SAMMY ANDREWS
DEVIATE DIGITAL

A MATURING STREAMING MARKET

In January, the Entertainment Retailers Association announced that music sales grew by 3% in 2022, to their highest level since 2003 and nearly double the level of their low point in 2013. The main driver of this growth (quelle surprise) was streaming, where revenues grew by 5%. Vinyl album sales increased by 11% and CD album sales fell by 17.4%. This is the first time that vinyl has outsold CDs in value since 1987. Are we reaching a point where a mature streaming market is slowing down? We most certainly are. Do we need to be looking ahead to new formats and monetisation routes? Definitely.

NEW FORMATS, CONSUMPTION AND REVENUE GENERATION

In regards to the conversation around streaming maturity, the music industry has been looking across social media, fitness and Web3 for advancements in formats and fairer monetisation for rights holders. This year, I expect there to be many public and behind-closed-doors debates around how (and when) this will be achieved. We can clearly see some industry frustration with specific social platforms on revenue generation and distribution, but we can also see other socials making plays to appease the wider entertainment and creator communities. However, unless the industry stands together to find a fair way forward, I am expecting debates throughout the year regarding how we can successfully monetise new and emerging formats.

CONTRACT UPDATES AND FAIR TERMS FOR THE FUTURE

Speaking of new formats, something I'm hearing more about everyday is artist and songwriter communities questioning how fairly they are being treated, or will be treated, for their streams that technically, in their contractual terms, may not yet class as streams or sales. The industry must be sure to tread carefully as we explore new ways to drive the business forward so that we are able to fairly compensate our artists and songwriters every step of the way.

IPO RESULTS

Of course, while all of this takes place, we await the results of the Intellectual Property Office working groups around data and transparency. The UK government representatives on the last DCMS streaming inquiry meeting noted that there was a lack of working groups around any form of remuneration. Whilst many in our business will be glad about that, with such significant changes on the horizon we must ask: at what point will the elephant in the room be addressed?

PHOTOS: Paul Harries, SOPA Images, Getty

TWEETS OF THE MONTH

@SiGlacken Music PR is sometimes laying in bed at night wondering why someone stopped replying to your emails in 2019. ***(Simon Glacken, For The Lost PR) Monday, January 16***

@katenash Me: You said I must eat so many lemons
You:
(Kate Nash, artist) Sunday, January 22

@niall_mdoherty Don't do it too much as you've gotta pick your moment, but just used "as stated below" in an email, taking the rest of the day off. ***(Niall Doherty, journalist) Tuesday, January 24***

@c_osazuwa Reaction videos to Taylor Swift coming out at The 1975 is honestly just the most wholesome shit. I just love that for everyone involved. ***(Christine Osazuwa, Shoobs) Saturday, Janauary 14***

@piri_io_bro I love when they play disclosure in Nando's let's GOOO ***(Piri, artist) Tuesday, January 24***

@JaguarWorldwide How do u not feel depressed in winter asking for me lol ***(Jaguar, BBC Radio 1) Friday, January 13***

@Slater81 Landed in Amsterdam. Could now be in taxi but... Brexit ***(Sarah Slater, Ticketmaster) Monday, January 23***

@DJTarget Landed from Jamaica to minus 2 degrees. No coat. The joys of being British ***(DJ Target, BBC Radio 1Xtra) Tuesday, January 17***

@jojoldn Just spent 17 quid in Pret? What's going on... ***(Jojo Sonubi, No Signal Radio) Wednesday, January 18***

#1 TWEET

@flolikethis Huge moment for us. Did someone say main stage? @WirelessFest ***(FLO, artist) Wednesday, January 25***

@LittleSimz Really, new year should be in spring when nature renews itself, but you know ***(Little Simz, artist) Tuesday, January 24***

@mvsgrave we live in a society that doesn't empower people to build things from scratch. Successful independent brands (and artists) can change that. ***(Andy Musgrave, Supernature) Thursday, January 12)***

@pollybirkbeck I don't mean to get all "Remember When", but remember when it was this cold and your mum drove you to school and 9 times out of 10 the car wouldn't start and she'd pull that mysterious thing called "the choke"? ***(Polly Birckbeck, Complete Control PR) Monday, January 23***

@rachelchinourir I want a fanbase of extremely patient, loving, kind, non-judgemental, smiley people. Less cancel culture and mean girl vibes, more smiling and forgiving/welcoming energy ***(Rachel Chinouriri, artist) Thursday, January 19***

@Sheniececharway I'm walking around like a penguin because I have so many layers on. ***(Sheniece Charway, YouTube) Wednesday, January 18***

RISING STAR

Meet the industry's brightest new talents...

Holly Jones

B2B & education event manager, Sound City
@hollyyejones

What made you choose the music industry as a career path?
"I never set out with the intention to work in music, I originally wanted to pursue a career in psychology. But once I had my first taste of working in music I loved it and knew that I would be putting psychology on hold for a while. Music has always been really special to me, I grew up going to gigs and listening to Bob Dylan religiously, so I feel very lucky to be able to put my passion into practice professionally and hopefully make a positive impact along the way."

Can you tell us what Sound City means to you personally and what do you think it means to the music industry?
"Sound City has been a huge part of my life since I completed the Launch Training programme here in 2018. Since then, Sound City has supported me in my development and provided me with amazing opportunities. I've been introduced to so many inspirational people and I have made some of my closest friends working here. It has definitely ignited my love for music and made me realise that a career in the industry was possible for me. It also helps that I love Liverpool, the festival is really important to people here, especially the music community. The education and training programmes help to support the next generation and provide opportunities for young people across the North West who may not have had them otherwise."

Your role involves working with people who want to get into the industry. What's the biggest lesson you've learned so far?
"One of the most important things is self-belief. When I first started I wasn't hugely confident and didn't completely trust my ability. But as I've progressed and produced more and more events, I've gained real confidence. Like with most things, you learn by making mistakes and I have definitely had a few of those – who hasn't! I'd say to any young people wanting a career in music, 'Work hard, believe in yourself and you can achieve anything you set your mind to.'"

What would you do to make the industry more accessible?
"There needs to be more support and access for individuals with neurodivergence. That might mean putting measures in place that provide a welcoming environment for people, such as organising more acoustic gigs and having no flashing lights. I'd also love to see more affordable gigs and more free courses. There's a huge number of creative and talented young people in our cities who aren't getting access to music and music education. More engagement across these communities would be huge."

Finally, what is your dream job in the industry and why?
"Ideally, I would love to work in a role that combines mental health, wellbeing and music. That's something I am really passionate about and I think there is still so much work that needs to be done to protect and support people working across the music sector."

HOLLY'S FAVOURITE TRACK: CVC – Good Morning Vietnam

PHOTO: Jack Hollingsworth

"There's a huge number of talented young people who aren't getting access to music education"
HOLLY JONES

ARE YOU A RISING STAR? Under 30? Making a name for yourself? Email Ben Homewood at ben.homewood@futurenet.com to appear here...

DOLORES FOREVER

*Pop comes naturally to songwriters **Hannah Wilson** and **Julia Fabrin**, so expectations are high for their **Dolores Forever** project. Here, they tell Music Week why theirs is no ordinary indie band...*

It was a mutual friend who plonked Hannah Wilson and Julia Fabrin together at a house party a few years back with the words, "you two will like each other – go and chat." It worked like a charm and the pair's close bond is at the core of their hotly tipped indie-pop project Dolores Forever, an inevitable musical coming together that the duo sought to avoid until it became impossible.

"We decided to hang out before attempting any sort of creativity, we both were out for a friendship," explains Wilson, as *Music Week* meets the pair in North London. "But it became unavoidable. We talked so much about songs that we loved and we went to a few gigs and eventually we were like, 'We're gonna have to fucking do it, aren't we? We're gonna have to write a song together.' Then we did it and we really liked it. There was a long incubation period for the band."

That sense of taking their time over things was born out of Wilson, who was raised on the outskirts of Leeds, and Danish native Fabrin's background as songwriters for hire.

"The side of songwriting that we've been immersed in has a tendency to feel like a conveyor belt," says Wilson, who contributed to Alok and Ilkay Sencan's Tove Lo-featuring dance smash Don't Say Goodbye (which has almost 200 million Spotify streams) and has worked with The Pussycat Dolls, Galantis, Agnes and more. "You're in and out every day with different people without valuing successful creative partnerships, it's a hamster wheel of churning songs out. If it's 8pm and you're rounding off a session for a pitch song, you might chuck in a lyric that you think is just okay, most songwriters must be guilty of that at some point. Dolores Forever is about taking time and having stillness around the songs. It's considered and personal."

Rather than writing to someone else's tune, the pair follow their own muse, adds Fabrin, who co-wrote Denmark's 2013 Eurovision entry Only Teardrops and recently worked as a writer for Icelandic sister duo EYJAA.

"We're making our favourite music, something we would want to listen to," she says. "I've learned along the way that you're always going to have people who have so many opinions, like, 'You should do this because this is fashionable.' That way, you're always chasing trends."

Emerging out of their approach is a sound that meshes Dolores Forever's love of pop with an indie sensibility, where Taylor Swift, Harry Styles, Bruce Springsteen and Joni Mitchell fandom mixes with a fondness for Sharon Van Etten, Lucy Dacus, Mitski and more.

"There are moments when pop music lets me down lyrically and there are moments when indie music lets me down melodically, and we're trying to bring together what we love from both genres," states Wilson.

It's all there on the rolling, synth-pop grooves of last year's Conversations With Strangers single, an indie-rock anthem anchored by introspection and themes of holding your mental health together.

"There's a chaos to it," opines Fabrin of the song, animatedly. "It's dark and dense."

It's a track, reckons Wilson, that shows the strides they've developed in the studio, skills honed during various lockdowns during the Covid pandemic.

"It boosted our confidence as topliners," she says. "It represents us and where we're going musically."

These are songs taking in the duo's life experiences, themes often lifted from conversations or things they've talked about over the course of a four-year-long WhatsApp thread.

"It's our thoughts about the world and how humanity works but how it pertains to us," says Fabrin.

Acceptance is a recurring subject, adds Wilson, and one they explore again on forthcoming single When I Say So.

As much as they're convinced that they would've been best friends if they had met aged 11, they feel proud to be launching Dolores Forever now in their mid-30s, signed to buzzy indie label Sweat Entertainment, which plans to release their debut album later this year.

"I feel like we all revere musicians that are fresh out of the womb, but it's never what I've been about," says Wilson. "My whole intention as a songwriter and my career in music has been really bloody hard work. I'm happy with being older and more experienced, it brings a different set of ideas."

"It's what we want the band to stand for," Fabrin adds. "We want to write songs about life and having experienced things and being women. We both come to this with so many stories."

Despite their history in the world of hitmaking, neither are sure precisely what constitutes a pop hit in 2023, but Fabrin is excited about how the lines have blurred and the old rules have dissipated.

"You can mix genres in a way you couldn't 20 years ago," she states. "There are loads of alternative sounds in the mainstream, you can mix elements, you don't have to stick to these boxes like, 'I make rock music with guitars.' The fact we can release songs as this project is great, there's a lot more scope for different things to have a platform now."

Conversely, Wilson is concerned about the industry's over-reliance on TikTok as a marketing tool, particularly for those artists who don't have a natural inclination for showing off on social media.

"Some of us introverts out there don't like looking at our face all the time on a small screen and putting out every centimetre of our personality to market a song," she reasons. "It feels lazy to me, the onus is shoved straight back onto the artist."

Instead, Dolores Forever would rather channel everything back into their music, a cathartic creative process that they're keen to bring into their other songwriting pursuits too.

"This has reminded me to mean everything I say and keep that bar high, and it's also showing people that I can do more than write dance toplines," says Wilson.

"When we're feeling excited about Dolores Forever, it spills into other stuff too," concludes Fabrin. "The more creativity you put out into the world, the more you get back." **NIALL DOHERTY**

ESSENTIAL INFO

RELEASES: When I Say So (TBC)
LABEL: Sweat Entertainment
MANAGEMENT: Oyster Management

WHAT THE TEAM SAY: Pete Jarrett, (founder, Sweat Entertainment): "Dolores Forever have an innate ability to write songs that instantly stick. Hannah and Julia had me hooked from the first track they played me and we have never looked back. Their anthemic live performances make them feel like festival headliners in waiting, they're a special band with an ambitious 2023 lined up."

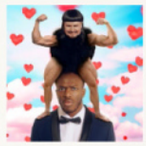
PHOTO: Francesca Allen

Friends forever: *(L-R) Hannah Wilson and Julia Fabrin*

"Songwriting can feel like a conveyor belt, but our band is about taking time, it's personal"

Hannah Wilson
Dolores Forever

THE PLAYLIST



KSI (FEAT. OLIVER TREE)

Voices (Atlantic)

KSI's first album for Atlantic is coming out and, judging from this opening taste, it could mark a step in a new direction. For starters, he sings all the way through it, aided by fellow viral star Oliver Tree. The country-style melody is infectious and will probably take over TikTok, while no frills production and simplicity underline KSI's bravery. And, with a track record like his, why not?

Contact: Claire Coster
claire.coster@atlanticrecords.co.uk

KALI UCHIS

I Wish You Roses (Geffen)

Kali Uchis' second album came out in late 2020 and in the intervening time, the Virginia-born star has had a bona fide viral smash in Telepatía and won her first Grammy. This comebback single is a love song dosed up on sedatives, and upcoming LP Red Moon In Venus will surely be huge.

Contact: Chris Cuff
chris.cuff@goodmachinepr.com

SLOWTHAI

Selfish (Method)

Due March 3, Slowthai's third album promises a kind of calm after the storm, as the rapper pauses to reflect on a somewhat chaotic career. Slathered with noise (Fontaines DC and Beabadoobee guitarist Jacob Bugden are among the guests), the record is an intriguing next step, as lead single Selfish suggests.

Contact: Beth Drake
beth@toastpress.com

UNKNOWN MORTAL ORCHESTRA

Layla (Dead Oceans)

On V, Ruban Nielson's sixth album as Unknown Mortal Orchestra, all his usual touchstones are present and correct (psychedelic atmosphere, soul-searching lyrics), making for an escapist delight. Highlight Layla shows that few fetishise the guitar quite like Nielson does.

Contact: Jodie Banaszkiewicz
jodie@staygoldenpr.com

KREPT & KONAN (FEAT. ABRA CADABRA)

Dat Way (Play Dirty)

Krept & Konan are independent once again, returning to their Play Dirty imprint with this cold-hued banger. The duo bring punchlines aplenty, namechecking Katie Hopkins and Jeff Bezos, while drill star Abra Cadabra delivers the gravelly, patient hook.

Contact: Kate Head
kate@stokedpr.com

GOGO PENGUIN

Saturnine (XXIM)

Manchester trio GoGo Penguin got a Mercury Prize nod back in 2014, and new album Everything Is Going To Be OK (due April 14) could see them permeate the mainstream once again. Drawing on personal loss to find hope in ambient compositions, tracks such as Saturnine exude pure joy.

Contact: Joss Meek
joss@wired-pr.co.uk

U.S. GIRLS

Futures Bet (4AD)

Meg Remy's songs as U.S. Girls are as perceptive as they are inventive, and this month's eighth album Bless This Mess (which she made while pregnant with twin boys) finds the Canadian at her riveting best. Boasting a pirouetting guitar line and an anthemic pop chorus, it distils the record perfectly.

Contact: Annette Lee
annettelee@4ad.com

Hear **THE PLAYLIST** at spotify.com/user/musicweek

TASTE MAKERS

The industry's favourite new sounds

Edward Adoo, DJ and Broadcaster, BBC Three Counties Radio

TALEBA WAX – WHEN IT ALL COMES DOWN

I came across a new reggae track recently from Taleba Wax, who is CEO of the British Sound System Collective and daughter of soundsystem don and selecta Gladdy Wax. I heard it while listening to the brilliant Reggae Rock show hosted by Keith Lawrence on Mi-Soul Radio and it reminded me of what the essence of contemporary reggae music is all about.

Taleba's voice is infectious and soulful, yet can rest comfortably on a reggae riddim. It took me back to hearing Diana King's Shy Guy. This song examines life when you have everything, but realise that it is really all about having basic things. I'm not sure whether it is a personal take on what Taleba may have been through, but it certainly explores what many people are experiencing right now in trying to survive challenging times.

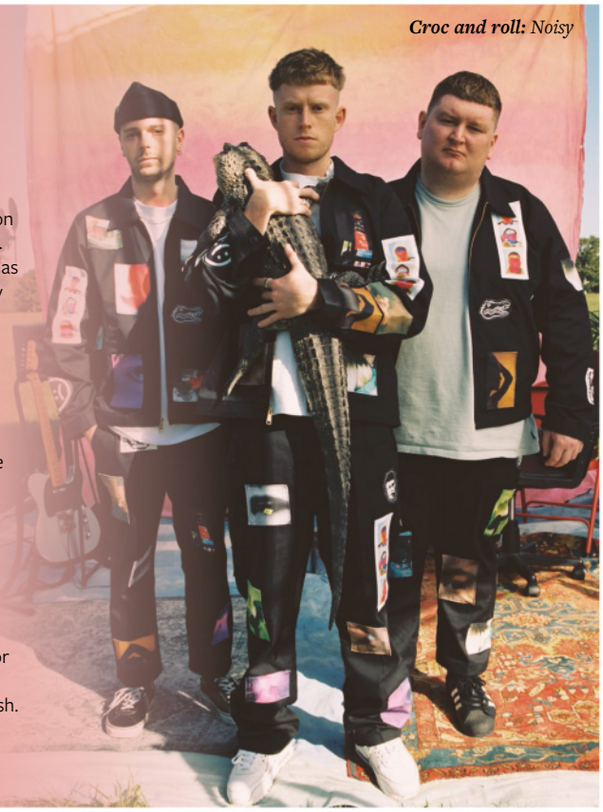
This song is really authentic and has the potential to cross over to daytime radio and be playlisted across all the main music channels. I hope to champion her tracks on the radio and that Taleba will break out in 2023. Look out for her!

MAKING WAVES

THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST BRAND NEW ACT

NOISY

Meet the dance-punk trio out to turn 2023 into a riotous rave...



Croc and roll: Noisy

Key Track: Rudeboy
Label: Concord Records
Management: Raw Power Management
Instagram: @theworldnoisy

You began 2023 by releasing Rudeboy. What's the story behind the single?
Cody Matthews, vocals: "It's about feeling completely locked into music, whether you're in a club, a packed tent, at a festival or on a night bus. When it hits, you can't think about anything else. Hopefully it has that effect on people!"

Last year saw the mainstream embrace dance music, do you think Noisy can get involved?
Connor Cheetham, guitarist: "It's sick. We're hugely inspired by dance and making people want to move. Of course, mainstream success is something we're aiming for, we want to headline Glastonbury. If you don't aim big there's no point."

You also have one foot in the rock world. How inspired are you feeling by that scene?
CM: "We always wanted Noisy to feel like an energetic live band, so we pull a lot of inspiration from the live side of rock and alternative music. Also, the way that the scene has embraced us has been amazing. Touring with Yungblud was really cool, his crowd were so up for it."

What is it like to work with Raw Power, what do they give you as managers?
Spencer Tobias-Williams, producer/guitarist: "Raw Power are great, Dan [Brown, manager] and the guys that we work with there really feel like members of the band and always push us to make our ideas come to life."

Lastly, you're known for being a DIY band and even managed to get your gear back when it was stolen on tour. What's the hardest thing about doing it all DIY?
ST-W: "It makes everything take a lot longer for sure, but the satisfaction is worth it, we know something is completely ours from start to finish. We've always had a strong vision, so in a way it comes quite easily. Getting the gear back was a mix of luck and extreme determination!"

SYNC STORY

Blue sky thinking: A scene from the in-game concert for Sky: Children Of The Light and (right) Aurora

SKY: CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT/AURORA

BY BEN HOMEWOOD

Decca's co-president Laura Monks is in awe of the way Aurora "keeps opening new worlds for her music," after the Norwegian singer played a virtual in-game concert on Sky: Children Of The Light.

Aurora treated players to a 45-minute virtual set, in which she played a selection of songs including Exhale Inhale, Runaway and The Seed. Decca also released an 18-track Sky: Concert In The Light album.

"Aurora has built an army of devoted followers across the globe, an audience that defies easy categorisation and transcends the boundaries between reality, digital and now the metaverse," Monks tells *Music Week*.

Co-president Tom Lewis nods to a growing list of stars that are embracing the gaming world as a promo tool.

"This performance places Aurora amongst a very small group of pioneering artists," he says. "We think this is only the start for her."

Aurora, who hit No.8 with her third album The Gods We Can Touch last January, says that she was excited by the opportunity to appear in the social adventure game.

"The light and the dark have always fascinated me," she says. "I love how the game deals with these themes and makes them easier to live with and accept. I think the fans' favourite thing about it is feeling like they're a part of something."

Aurora is managed by Even Kjelby, Helga Steen-Olsen, Geir Luedy and Emily Kennedy, and the team is delighted with the project.

"Aurora and Sky were an incredible match," says Kjelby. "The game explores human connections and the same can be said about Aurora's universe, which centres around connecting people through the acceptance that it's okay to be different."

"Aurora's fans now transcend the boundaries between reality, digital and the metaverse"

Laura Monks, Decca

Spot: Sky: Children Of The Light
Artist: Aurora
Writers: Aurora, Glen Roberts, Magnus Skylstad, Roy Kerr, Timothy Bran, Michelle Leonard, Nicolas Rebscher, Janis Liphardt, Odd Martin Skålnes, Alex Knolle, Alf Lund Godbolt, Fiona Bevan, James Jacob, Couros Sheibani
Publishers: Ultra, Budde, Kobalt Music Publishing, ThatGameCompany, Universal Music Publishing Group, Imagem, Sony Music Publishing
Master: Decca
Production company: ThatGameCompany
Air date: 08.12.22

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KEY RELEASES

The essential albums heading your way...

FEBRUARY 14

Caroline Polachek Desire, I Want To Turn Into You Perpetual Novice
Macy Gray & The California Jet Club The Reset Moonslice

FEBRUARY 17

Billy Lockett Abington Grove Photo Finish
Deus How To Replace It PIAS
Inhaler Cuts & Bruises Polydor
Jesse Malin The Fine Art Of Self Destruction One Little Independent
Lowly Keep Up The Good Work Bella Union
Orbital Optical Delusion London
Pink Trustfall RCA
Ron Sexsmith The Vivian Line Cooking Vinyl
Skillet Dominion: Day Of Destiny Atlantic
Those Damn Crows Inhale/Exhale Earache
Wesley Joseph Glow Secretly Canadian/Evil Twin

FEBRUARY 24

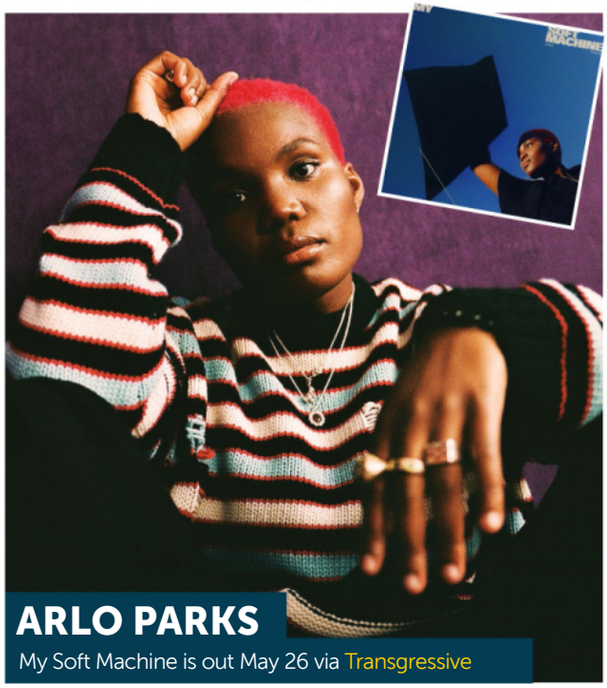
Adam Lambert High Drama Warner
Algiers Shook Matador
Amber Run How To Be Human Tripel
Callum Beattie Vandals 3Beat
Death Valley Girls Islands In The Sky Suicide Squeeze
Elderbrook Little Love Mine
Gina Birch I Play My Bass Loud Third Man
Godsmack Lighting Up The Sky BMG
Gorillaz Cracker Island Parlophone
Gracie Abrams Good Riddance Interscope
Insomnium Anno 1696 Century Media
Living Dead Girl Not That Innocent Buried Alive
Motörhead Bad Magic: Seriously Bad Magic Silver Lining
Philip Selway Strange Dance Bella Union
Shame Food For Worms Dead Oceans
Steel Panther On The Prowl Steel Panther
Tiësto Drive Atlantic

MARCH 3

Eva Cassidy I Can Only Be Me Blix Street
Hans Zimmer & The Disruptive Collective Hans Zimmer Live Sony
Macklemore Ben Bendo
Mimi Webb Amelia RCA
Sigala Every Cloud Ministry Of Sound/B1
Slowthai Ugly Method
Steel Banglez The Playlist Gifted
Steve Mason Brothers & Sisters Domino
The Lathums From Nothing To A Little Bit More Island
Yazmin Lacey Voices Notes Believe

MARCH 10

Avelino God Save The Streets More Music/OddChild
Miley Cyrus Endless Summer Vacation RCA
Periphery Periphery V: Djent Is Not A Genre 3Dot
Roadrunner United The Concert (Live at Nokia Theatre, NY) The All Blacks BV



ARLO PARKS
My Soft Machine is out May 26 via Transgressive

Ryan Hamilton Haunted By The Holy Ghost Wicked Cool
Story Of The Year Tear Me To Pieces SharpTone
The Cold Stares Voices Mascot
The Luka State More Than This Thirty Tigers
Van Morrison Moving On Skiffle Exile
Ward Thomas Music In The Madness WTW

MARCH 17

100 Gecs 10,000 Gecs Dog Show/Atlantic
All Time Low Tell Me I'm Alive Fueled By Ramen
The Answer Sundowner Golden Robot/7Hz
Trampolene Rules Of Love & War Strap Originals
U2 Songs Of Surrender Island/Interscope

MARCH 24

Babymetal The Other One Cooking Vinyl
Ellie Goulding Higher Than Heaven Polydor

Fall Out Boy So Much (For) Stardust Fall Out Boy
Floor Jansen Paragon Floor Jansen
Katie Melua Love & Money BMG
Kele The Flames Pt 2 Kola/!K7
Lana Del Rey Did You Know That There's A Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd Polydor
Pink Floyd The Dark Side Of The Moon - Live At Wembley 1974 (2023 Master) Parlophone
The Bouncing Souls Ten Stories High Pure Noise

MARCH 31

The Blaze Jungle Animal63
A Certain Ratio 1982 Mute
Ad Infinitum Chapter III: Downfall Napalm
Boygenius The Record Interscope/Polydor
Bury Tomorrow The Seventh Sun Music For Nations
City And Colour The Love Still Held Me Near Still/Dine Alone
DMA'S How Many Dreams? I Oh You
Max Jury Avenues Max Jury
Ryan McMullan Redesign Ryan McMullan

BOYGENIUS
The Record is out March 31 via Interscope/Polydor

The Hold Steady The Price Of Progress Positive Jams

APRIL 7

Billie Marten Drop Cherries Fiction
Daughter Stereo Mind Game 4AD
Debbie Harry KooKoo - Deluxe Chrysalis
Dream Theater Lost Not Forgotten Archives: Distance Over Time Demos (2018) InsideOut
Ruston Kelly The Weakness Rounder (Concord)
Teleman Good Time/Hard Time Moshi Moshi
Yaeji With A Hammer XL

APRIL 14

David Bowie Aladdin Sane: 50th Annniversary Parlophone
Metallica 72 Seasons Blackened/Universal
Natalie Merchant Keep Your Courage Nonesuch
Temples Exotico ATO

APRIL 21

Enter Shikari A Kiss For The Whole World SO/Silva Screen
The Heavy Amen Bad Son
The Smashing Pumpkins Atum Thirty Tigers

APRIL 28

Black Coast Black Coast Paradise
Dave Hause Drive It Like It's Stolen Blood Harmony/Soundly
Lucy Spraggan Balance CTRL
Nate Smith Nate Smith Sony

The National First Two Pages Of Frankenstein 4AD

MAY 5

Don Letts Outta Sync Cooking Vinyl
Freya Ridings Blood Orange Good Soldier/AWAL
Himalayas From Hell To Here Nettwerk
Shakin' Stevens Re-Set BMG

MAY 19

Dan Croll Fools Communion
Lewis Capaldi Broken By Desire To Be Heavenly Sent EMI

MAY 26

Arlo Parks My Soft Machine Transgressive

JUNE 2

Louise Greatest Hits Tag 8/BMG
Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds Council Skies Sour Mash
Rival Sons Darkfighter Atlantic

JUNE 22

Peter Hepworth Our Kingdom Of Summer Blue Bus Tour

Please email any key releases information to isabelle.nesmon@futurenet.com
A more extensive release schedule is available in the new music section on musicweek.com

INCOMING

Mimi Webb's meteoric rise is set to reach its latest peak with the release of her debut album **Amelia** and, to celebrate, *Music Week* meets the star to talk identity, TikTok and representation...

Your album uses your first name as its title. Do you ever feel a conflict between Amelia and Mimi Webb, the pop star?

"Amelia is the countryside girl from Canterbury and Mimi Webb is the pop star who travels the world and does all these things that I always dreamt of. When I was 16, I decided I wanted to change my name to Mimi Webb, that was when I really knew what I wanted to do and was in music college, which was the right environment for getting started. To put both names together has been so fun and the album is the journey of both those people, of growing up in this crazy industry and learning more about myself. I'm at a point now where I know what makes me happy and a lot of things I do as Amelia keep me going as Mimi."

> *"It's important to stand up for yourself and speak your mind"*
>
> **Mimi Webb**

There's a real vulnerability and relatability to your music. What's the secret to crafting something personal that so many people can relate to?

"I love to play my songs to my friends and family – I do a lot of things like that on TikTok – just to see if they'll get the idea of what the song's about. The amazing thing is that people take their own perceptions and thoughts on a song and then relate it to themselves and whatever they're going through. I like to keep the stories open for people to be able to do that as well."

TikTok has been key in your story. What's the biggest lesson you've learned from it?

"It really helped me build my fanbase and kickstart me in the industry to the point where it then translated into streams. Before I joined TikTok, I did three years of learning what the industry was about and building my brand behind closed doors, so I knew where I wanted to go. But there are a lot of artists who post a song, then a week later they're signing these crazy deals. And it can be scary, because then a few months later you're expected to put out an album. That's why I'm so grateful I did so much prep and learning about the industry, so that when I'm in those conversations, I can do what's best."

You've previously described yourself as "gobby". To what extent do you think being able to speak up for yourself has helped achieve your goals?

"Oh, massively. As a female artist, [it's important] to be able to stand up for yourself and speak your mind, vocalise what you want to be and how you want to come across. At the start, you compare yourself to other artists and I'd always be like, 'Oh, can I do that?' If I hadn't learned not to do that early on, I probably would have freaked out. I signed my deal when I was 18 and the first three years were just grafting in the studio and getting the music and brand ideas together. I really learned to stand up for myself when I felt like I needed to, and that's so important. That's something that comes across on the album, too. Amelia has had to really back herself up and point out what I would have been as an artist [without that], and also how I want to come across as a person."

You were among the nominees at the BRITs, and some of the shortlists came under fire for a lack of representation of women. Where do you stand on the issue?

"I don't have all the answers as to what the BRITs should or shouldn't be doing, but I do know that there are loads of amazing women, and while we're not in the Artist Of The Year category, we are represented across the whole of the awards. For me, I was just so grateful to be nominated. It's something I have been so excited about for so many years and something that I've always dreamt of. So to be able to tick it off this year is incredible. I love manifesting and mind boards and all of that stuff and a No.1 album and a No.1 single are also on mine for this year, as well as just really pushing my music in America. I'm just so excited for it all."

Mimi, myself and I: *Mimi Webb releases her debut album Amelia (below) via RCA on March 3*

INTERVIEW: Charlotte Gunn **PHOTO:** Hayley Louisa Brown

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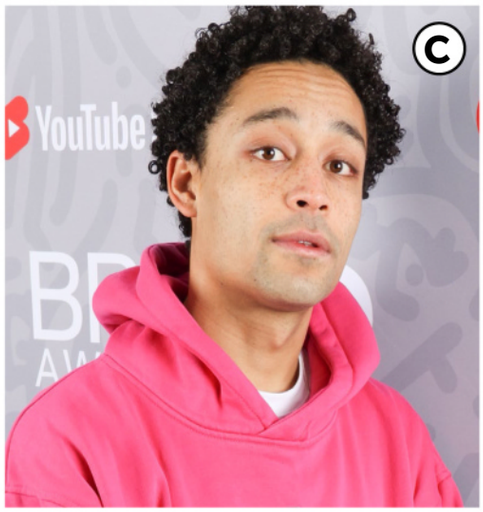
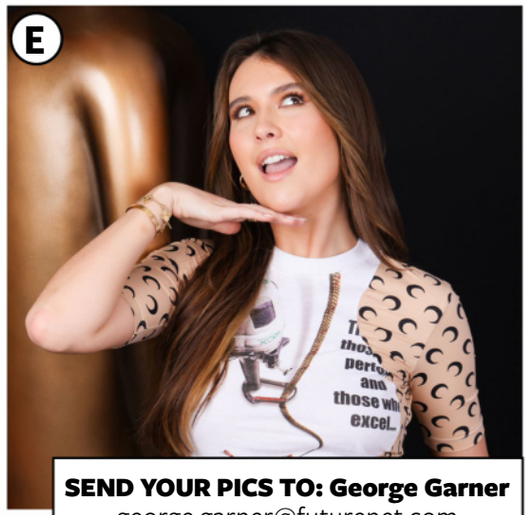
1. Anti-Heroes The UK leg of The 1975's thrilling At Their Very Best tour went down a storm, and sent the internet into meltdown after the band brought Taylor Swift out on stage to debut her hit single Anti-Hero live at London's The O2. (Photos: Jordan Curtis Hughes). **2. Heavy hitter** The Atlantic Records UK team celebrated with KSI after his first round KO win against FaZe Temperrr. The star was presented with a plaque to commemorate his boxing wins, as well as selling out The O2 and Wembley Arena in the space of five months. Pictured here are (*L-R*): Will Beardmore (director, digital, Atlantic Records UK), Joe Barbe (senior A&R manager, Atlantic Records UK), Fay Hoyte (director, marketing, Atlantic Records UK), Mams Taylor (manager, KSI), Tia Friday (marketing manager, Atlantic Records UK), KSI, Ed Howard (co-president, Atlantic Records UK) and Austin Daboh (EVP, Atlantic Records UK).

3





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george.garner@futurenet.com

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3. As BRIT was (a) The nominations for this year's BRIT Awards with Mastercard were revealed with a 30-minute special streamed across the official BRIT digital channels, presented by Vick Hope and Jack Saunders. Also appearing were nominated acts such as **(b)** Nova Twins **(c)** Loyle Carner **(d)** Sam Ryder **(e)** Mimi Webb. (Photos: John Marshall/JMEnternational).

4. Wedding slay To celebrate the release of Måneskin's latest album, Rush, Spotify threw them the wedding of the year at Palazzo Brancaccio in Rome, Italy. All four members – Damiano David, Victoria De Angelis, Thomas Raggi and Ethan Torchio – symbolically tied the knot in a rock and roll ceremony promising eternal loyalty to each other. Guests included master of ceremonies Alessandro Michele, plus Baz Luhrmann, Machine Gun Kelly, Paolo Sorrentino, Sabrina Impacciatore, Floria Sigismondi, Paulo Dybala, Fedez and Oriana Sabatini. (Photos: Ilaria Ieie, Fabio Germinario).

5. Chasing status Australian sensations Chase Atlantic celebrated three sold-out Hammersmith Eventim Apollo shows. Pictured here are (*back row, L-R*): Joe Schiavon (Live Nation), Nikos Kazoleas (UTA), Naveed Hassan (MDDN), Patrick Wilde and Chris Shelley (@create), Paul Ryan (UTA), Luke Temple (SJM Concerts) and (*front row, L-R*): Mitchel Cave, Clinton Cave and Jesse Boyle.

TIME TO

Since emerging in 2000, Pink has distinguished herself as one of the biggest artists and top live draws in the world. Ahead of the release of her incredible new album Trustfall, *Music Week* joins the star – real name Alecia Moore – her manager Roger Davies, RCA's John Fleckenstein and David Dollimore, plus Barrie Marshall of Marshall Arts, to discuss a career that has defied all the odds and a lot of expectations along the way. With a huge UK summer stadium tour on the way, too, it's officially time to get the party (re)started...

WORDS: GEORGE GARNER

PHOTO/COVER PHOTO: Sølve Sundsbø

O SHINE

"I like making people feel uncomfortable, that's where the yummy stuff comes in"
PINK

We begin with the title of the best-selling book that never was: Artist To Artist – How To Get Fucked 101 by Alecia Moore. You know her better by the name of Pink.

"I went through so much clichéd bullshit for the first four or five years of my career that I wanted to write a book called that," she tells *Music Week* from her home as sunlight streams in through the floral curtains draped behind her. "It would be, like, 'If you do this, you're fucked!' or, 'Do that, you're fucked!' Yep, I did all of that. And that was going to be my legacy [*laughs*]."

Suffice to say that the book in question does not actually exist, and for two very good reasons. First, Pink never wrote it. Second, and despite her self-deprecation, she never had to. Instead, the artist greeting us today – sporting a big smile, framed by short blonde hair and dangling hoop earrings – has an altogether more impressive legacy.

Since emerging with her debut, Can't Take Me Home, in 2000, Pink has sold over 60 million records worldwide, broken live attendance records and scooped up prestigious awards including three Grammys and the MTV Video Vanguard accolade – its other illustrious honourees being the likes of Michael Jackson, Rihanna, Beyoncé and Britney Spears. Oh, and a star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame. But it's not just what she's achieved that's impressive, it's the unique manner in which she's done it.

"Pink's an icon," hails her manager Roger Davies. "She's never been a conformist, always followed her heart and yet has sustained an amazing career over 23 years. She has an incredible voice, she's an important songwriter, she always has something to say and she can sell out stadiums all over the world."

As pop history scholars can attest, a lot of artists' careers play out in a similar fashion: the rapid rise, the even faster implosion; the overnight success, the plateau, the gradual decline; and who could forget the world-conquering fame, the fall-off and the triumphant comeback tour? Pink's trajectory bucks all of them: a good old-fashioned story of sustained growth. Her last two studio albums, 2017's Beautiful Trauma and 2019's Hurts 2B Human both hit No.1 in the UK, those cycles also seeing her play stadia around the world – including two nights at Wembley Stadium. For RCA US COO John Fleckenstein, who's worked with her from the start of her career, her survival instincts in a permanently changing music business are a thing of wonder.

"Pink's been around long enough to see the transformation of this industry from sales to streaming and from purchase to access," he observes. "These are big, seismic shifts, and she's managed to continuously adapt and understand what's important. She's also managed to do that across multiple countries around the world. Frankly, it's amazing."

"Pink's a trailblazer," agrees RCA UK president David Dollimore. "There's no one like her, and I think it's her ambition that's helped her continue to get bigger and bigger over the years."

If you think that her ninth studio album Trustfall – released February 17 via RCA – is about to see that drive deteriorate into cruise control, think again. Roger Davies is unequivocal when he tells *Music Week* that it's "the best album of her career so far". Indeed, when it came to its lead single Never Gonna Not Dance Again, Pink had a pretty lofty brief when she contacted long-time collaborators Max Martin and Shellback. She wanted to write their best song ever.

"People usually go to them, like, 'What have you got? Give us the magic!'" she reflects. "I think it's really fun for them when someone comes with an idea, like, 'This is what I want, it's very specific, it's called Never Gonna Not Dance Again, and it has to be the best song we've ever made! No pressure.'"

It wasn't just her own exacting high standards driving this brief, it was her lived experience. In 2020, Pink – an asthma sufferer – came down with Covid, and so too did her son Jameson, who was aged just three at the time. It hit them both hard. Jameson's illness continued for weeks, leaving a distraught Pink praying for him to pull through, which thankfully he did. She emerged with a new sense of perspective – those times in the past where, say, her kids would ask her to play on the beach and she declined? They now struck her as lost opportunities to make a memory. She needed a song to acknowledge that revelation. Written with Martin and Shellback over FaceTime – between lots of "giggling and shots of whiskey" – the up-tempo disco pop of Never Gonna Not Dance Again is as life-affirming as it gets.

"After the fact, Shellback was like, 'I actually think this might be my favourite production I've ever worked on!'" adds Pink. "I said, 'See, you're welcome!'"

Never Gonna Not Dance Again has subsequently become a UK No.1 airplay hit, and has amassed over 32 million streams on Spotify alone. And that's just a glimpse of what's in store: Trustfall's title-track is another banger in waiting, a sleek EDM monster produced by Fred Again.. and Johnny McDaid. The concept of a trust fall – the group exercise where individuals lean backwards in order to be caught mid-air by a support network – resonated deeply with Pink. It speaks to the maelstrom of our shared human predicament right now.

"I feel like that's what life is right now, especially with the pandemic: getting out of bed, going to work, dropping your kids off at school, participating in elections..." she trails off, seemingly exhausted by the list. "It all feels like you're falling backwards and it requires so much trust. It's maddening, it's beautiful, but it's life. It's a really, really interesting time. I feel like our parents said the same shit, right? Every generation has been like [adopts an old fogey accent, talking out of one corner of her mouth], 'It's a *craaaaazy* time!' I know that makes me sound like an old mom, but it's how it feels. We have to be our own heroes right now."

Pink's willingness to explore the tension between the "maddening and the beautiful" goes a long way to explaining why her skirmish against mainstream sensibilities has been so successful for over two decades. Notorious for her blunt force candour – when *Music Week* presses record at the start of the interview, she beams, "Not if but *when* I put my foot in mouth, we gotta make sure we got it on tape!" – she has long proven herself to be a charmingly frank alternative to the press-trained indifference of many modern pop stars.

On record she is every bit as forthcoming, making hits out of subjects as varied as divorce, mental health, beauty standards, masturbation and even political unrest. In 2006, Dear Mr President had George W Bush firmly in its sights, while 2017's What About Us had people in red states dancing, completely unaware that it was partly informed by the failure of Donald Trump's America.

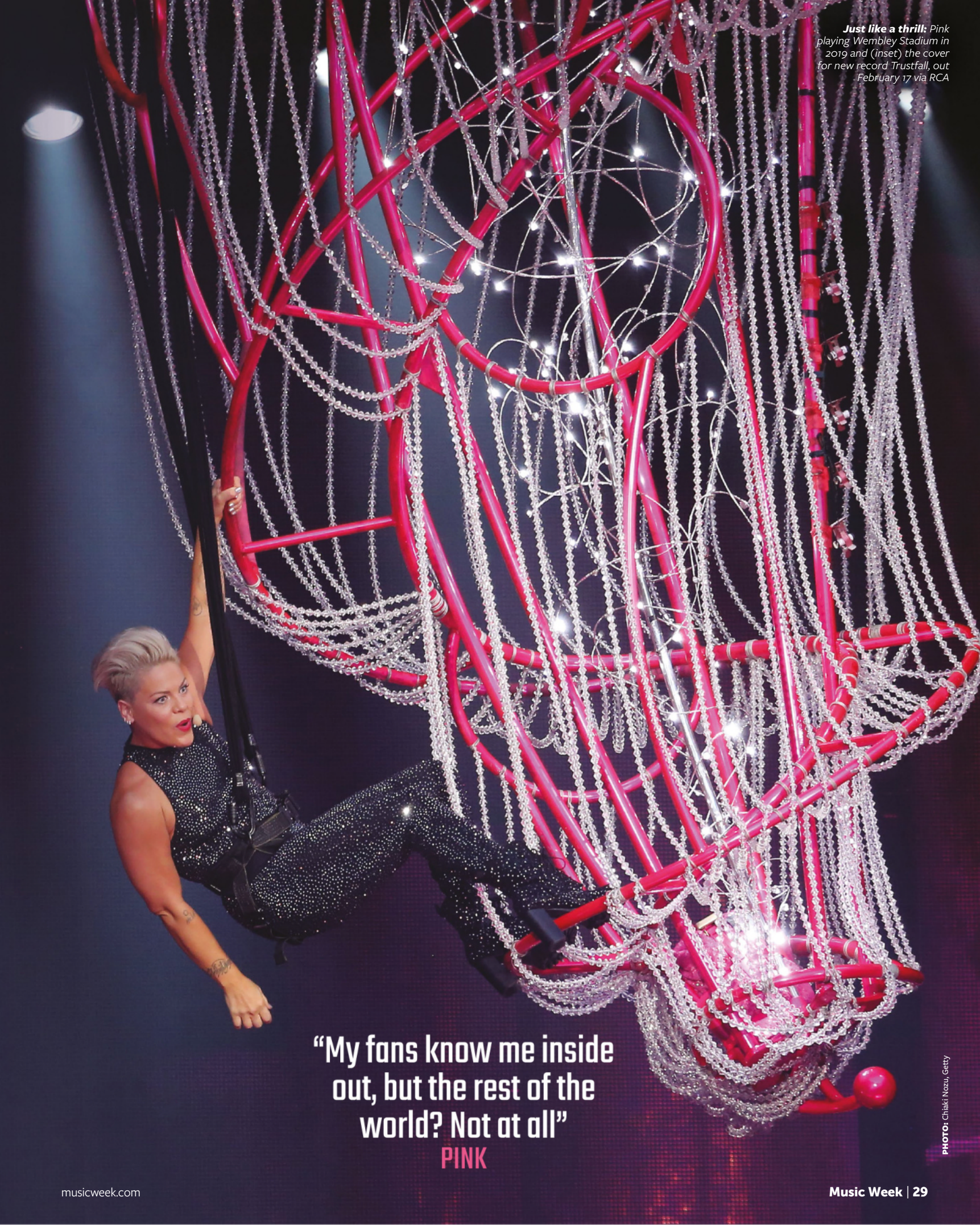
At the heart of everything has been the hard fight to preserve her individuality. Consistently and unapologetically, Pink has flaunted industry convention in order to be her undiluted self. And she's preached the importance of that to others. If you ever fancy turning your eyes into hosepipes, simply consult her MTV Vanguard award acceptance speech, which she addressed to her daughter Willow after she confessed to her mum that she felt like the "ugliest girl I know". From the outside looking in, she's always made all of this look easy. But is blazing her own trail simply a matter of telling everyone to fuck off, or has it exacted an emotional toll on her, too?

"It's both," she says. "I heard a quote yesterday that said, 'If the path before you is clear, then you're probably on somebody else's.' I love that, and that's exactly what we're talking about. It hurts, but I like being uncomfortable. And I like making

> **"Pink is one of the greatest live performers in the world, she gives every ounce of herself"**
>
> **BARRIE MARSHALL, MARSHALL ARTS**

ROLE CALL
MEET TEAM P!NK

Management: Roger Davies (RDWM)
Additional Management Team: Dane Hoyt, Shady Farshadfar, Lisa Garrett, Nikki Mestrovic, Nik Tischler (RDWM)
Tour Coordinator: Bill Buntain, Bonus Management Inc.
UK label: RCA/Sony
President: David Dollimore (RCA)
Executive Vice President: Stacey Tang (RCA)
Marketing: Simon Forbes (RCA)
Digital marketing: Shailee Shah (RCA)
Live promoter: Barrie Marshall (Marshall Arts)
Print & Online Press: Sarah Hall (RCA)
Radio: Phil Youngman (RCA)
TV: Sarah Haddow (Shaddow TV Promotions)



Just like a thrill: *Pink playing Wembley Stadium in 2019 and (inset) the cover for new record Trustfall, out February 17 via RCA*

"My fans know me inside out, but the rest of the world? Not at all"
PINK

PHOTO: Chiaki Nozu, Getty

"Early on, Roger asked me, 'How hard will you work?' I said, 'I'll die for this, it's all I have'"
PINK
"Trustfall is the best album of Pink's career so far"
ROGER DAVIES

other people uncomfortable, because it's authentic, it's messy. And that's where the yummy stuff comes in."

As she utters those last words, a large grin spreads across her face. She is, she explains, a disciple of Billy Joel, Don McLean, Janis Joplin and Joni Mitchell, all artists that defined her childhood.

"They teach you that life is not supposed to be pretty," she says. "And the pretty stuff isn't all that interesting. It's messy, so why cover it up? We want to know people. I want to know about Edgar Allan Poe's life, like *why* did he write that shit? What was happening to him? With Janis Joplin, I wouldn't understand that voice if I didn't understand the pain beneath it. So the artists that I can't know? I'm like, 'Well, that's a nice song, I guess, but it's not interesting.' I need more. I need the nitty gritty."

"My stepmother once had a quote on her wall that said, 'If you never tell a lie, you never have to remember anything,'" she adds. "I was like, 'Huh, that's good because my memory sucks! I'll do that then!' This is who I am, and I refuse to let anyone put me into any other mould."

It's an attitude that was forged a long time ago...

Towards the end of his life, Pink had a heart-to-heart with her father, Jim Moore. In 2020, she revealed via Instagram that he was undergoing a second round of chemotherapy for prostate cancer.

"What do you want to come back as?" she asked him, broaching the subject of reincarnation.

"Well, I'm a pilot, sweetheart, so I want to be a bird of flight," he replied.

He was, Pink reflects with *Music Week* back in the present day, also on morphine at the time, so he quickly added another animal to the list.

"Or a cannibal chipmunk," he said.

"Yeah," Pink replied. "Let's go back to the bird."

While the final form he wanted to assume was left open, there was no question as to what he was to Pink during the course of his life. "I dedicate this album to my daddy – my hero, my glue," she wrote in the liner notes to her debut Can't Take Me Home. His passing in 2021 was an immeasurable loss.

"Grief is such a weird thing to me because I lost so many people at such a young age, so many friends of mine," she says, solemnly. "I've done the funeral thing, I've done the grief thing, but I'd never lost a parent. People always tell you, 'Oh, that's a bag you're gonna be unpacking for a long time,' and you don't really understand what that means. Even if you had an idyllic childhood, it's complicated. It's a bag you just keep unpacking."

Those complex feelings find expression in Trustfall's standout song, When I Get There. An elegiac track penned by David Hodges and Amy Wadge, it beautifully articulates the different stages of grief, and all the unanswered questions that loom.

"I played it for my best friend who lost her mom a little bit before I lost my dad, and she's still not speaking to me," she says, wincing as reflects on the song's gut-punching power. "The interesting part will be seeing if I can do it live."

Jim Moore didn't just believe in his daughter, he armoured her with self-belief. In Pink's 2021 song All I Know So Far – the single soundtracking her Amazon documentary of the same name – she worked something he once told her into the chorus. '*You throw your head back and you spit in the wind,*' she sang.

Pink still vividly recalls when he imparted that advice while driving her to her first singing contest.

"I remember looking at him in the front seat and him going, 'Honey, you just put your head back, spit in the wind, and show them what you got,'" she reflects. "And he raised me that way. I mean, he was a Vietnam vet. He was tough, and he raised me like that, but he was also a poet, a folk singer and he knew the language of the trees. He gave me all of that. He was always so proud of me."

That 'spit in the wind' philosophy has served Pink well in pursuing a career without limitations. Listen to Trustfall and you'll be struck by the sheer amount of genres she traverses, from pop to rock to country, all while collaborating with the likes of First Aid Kit, Chris Stapleton and The Lumineers.

"Pink consistently moves around genres yet everything always feels contemporary," praises RCA's David Dollimore. "She has that luxury where she can do different styles. We all know certain artists don't jump out of their comfort zone, but Pink's done that across all the albums she's put out. That's why I call her a trailblazer. Not many artists do that."

That luxury has been hard-earned. Lest we forget, when Pink emerged in 2000, it was as an R&B/pop proposition at a time when genre distinctions were both highly rigid and prescriptive. They soon chafed. For RCA's John Fleckenstein, two words spring to mind when it comes to the question of what the music industry can take from the Pink story so far.

"The words would be 'bravery' and 'perspective'," he explains. "I've seen nothing but her doing the bravest thing at the most important moments, and that allowed her to unlock and transform it into a career of this magnitude. The other word, perspective, I use in the context of her lasting star wattage. It's so rare to see somebody, particularly in the pop universe, be this big for so long, and continue to get bigger and bigger. A lot of it comes down to her ability to take a step back and go, 'This is where I'm at in the world and this is true to me'. That's a huge factor in how she's been able to transcend what a lot of people have not been able to do in the pop universe."

Double trouble: *Pink and manager Roger Davies and (insets, top to bottom) with John Fleckenstein and Barrie Marshall*

> **"It's rare to see somebody continue to get bigger and bigger for so long, especially in pop"**
>
> **JOHN FLECKENSTEIN, RCA**

Pink made brave decisions right from the beginning when, as a member of the LaFace-signed R&B trio Choice, she took the label's ultimatum to disband the group and pursue a solo career. Her biggest gamble, however, came with her 2001 second outing, Missundaztood – a record in which she boldly reimagined herself as a rock-centric pop star. Her manager Roger Davies remembers the time well.

"I first met Pink in 2001 and was immediately impressed by her star charisma – she was fiercely ambitious," he recalls. "I was living in London at the time and I didn't know much about her other than I remembered her riding a motorbike through a plate glass window in her video for There You Go. She told me that she wanted to make a rock/pop album."

Indeed, without her label's knowledge, she had already covertly started the process.

"She'd found Linda Perry's phone number in a makeup artist's notebook and said that she was going to call her to get some songs," he continues. "She visited Linda, who gave her Get The Party Started, and my first job was to tell [Arista president/CEO] LA Reid that Pink wanted to make a rock/pop album rather than another R&B pop album like Can't Take Me Home."

Not only that, she even included her A&R odyssey in the lyrics to Don't Let Me Get Me ('*LA told me, you'll be a pop star/all you have to change is everything you are*'). For the record, Pink has her own idea of what would have transpired had she capitulated and delivered Can't Take Me Home Part 2.

"I know I wouldn't still have a career like I have," she observes.

PHOTOS: Andrew Macpherson, David Morrison

"It wouldn't have been interesting enough."

Pink's insurrection paid off big time, in turn becoming one of the greatest examples of artistic self-determination of the post-millennium. Missundaztood remains her best-selling album in the UK, on 6x platinum sales of 1,882,665 according to Official Charts Company data. In the UK, another three of her releases have gone 4x platinum: 2006's I'm Not Dead (1,435,866), 2008's Funhouse (1,349,977) and 2010's Greatest Hits – So Far (1,320,518). Together with Davies – who David Dollimore praises as "one of the best managers in the world" – Pink redefined who she was on a global scale. Mention his name out loud, and her badass voice immediately softens in tone.

"He's the love of my life, he's the man I respect the most," she says of Davies.

Remember that How To Get Fucked 101 book Pink wanted to write? He's a big reason why she didn't have to pen it.

"When I met him, I was an abused puppy," she says. "If you've ever been to a dog shelter, I was the one cowering in the corner that was ready to bite. I [once] renegotiated my contract for an outfit and a bag of weed when I was 17 years old. It was *stupid*. When I met Roger, I had been managing myself. And that went well..."

And how did Pink rate, erm, Pink, as a manager?

"Well, I secured my own publishing deal, I was pretty proud of that!" she laughs. "But when I met Roger, he was like, 'What the fuck is this?' I'm like, 'That's my contract, don't crumple it! What are you doing!?'"

She recalls a question Davies asked her in the early days.

"His thing was, 'How hard will you work?'" she remembers. "I said, 'I'll die for this. This is all I have, I will die if I don't.'"

It's easy to get used to hyperbole in the music industry, but in Pink's case it's true. When it comes to her live shows, she really is risking life and limb...

It's July 15, 2010. Pink is standing centre stage in front of the baying crowd packed into the Easy Credit Stadion in Nuremberg, Germany. As the opening strains of So What begin, two dancers each start to attach a wire to a circular harness around Pink's waist – wires that are primed to rocket her into the air for the show's grand finale. One dancer is visibly struggling to clip the line into one side. Something is wrong. Pink raises her arms into an X shape to alert the crew but it's too late. On musical cue, one wire – instead of both – pulls taut and drags Pink offstage, hurtling her into a steel safety barrier. Still mic'd up, the words "Fuck, that hurt!" echo around the now silent arena. Eventually, she hobbles up onto the stage.

"So, I'm not sure, but I possibly broke something," she says. "I'm very sorry I won't be able to do the last song, but thank you for coming and always being supportive."

She limps off to the sound of nervous-yet-relieved applause.

It's a reminder – were any needed – of the risks Pink takes in order to blow people away every time she takes to the stage. Her dazzling aerial feats are the stuff of legend.

"I've been to many of her shows and they are such a spectacle of brilliance," says David Dollimore. "I've never seen anyone that pushes themselves with their performances like Pink."

Her live agent, Barrie Marshall of Marshall Arts, has known her since 2000, and witnessed the evolution that her live show has taken first hand.

"Pink's one of the greatest live performers in the world," he says. "However huge the venue, she has that rare quality to engage with every single person in an audience. She gives every ounce of herself in each show, which is why they're unforgettable."

Pink's 2021 documentary All I Know So Far is revelatory in this regard as it details her preparations for a two-night stand at Wembley Stadium. At one point she's captured telling the crew that the show – full of spectacle – is somehow still not good enough in her eyes. The question, of course, is why does she continue to risk life and limb by constantly upping the ante, when she could, in truth, just belt her songs out like so many others do at this point?

"Ah, I know, I know, I know," she says, shaking her head. "And the insurance company's like, 'You're getting older,' and I'm like, 'Yeah, well, you're cutting the cheque – look I can still do a full split!' You can tell when you go to a show and the artist cares, and you can tell when they don't. I've been to those shows when they don't and it's offensive – it's offensive to me that you would take somebody's money. Just go take a break, buy a bar on a beach and fuck off! Don't just take people's money then go up there with your hands in your pocket sitting on an amp singing a song that I loved as a child. Don't ruin my life, fuck you [*laughs*]. That's how I feel about it. And I've been to those shows, and I hate them. I won't listen to their songs anymore."

Jaw-dropping spectacle is only part of the equation when it comes to Pink's phenomenal growth as a live act. To fully understand that, you need to go right back to her early conversations with Roger Davies and the global vision they shared together.

"When we first met, she was doing dates opening for NSync and singing to track," reflects Davies. "I instinctively wanted to make her a live touring artist. We put together a band and started performing in clubs all over the world. England was very important to us. I can remember a turning point when we played at Brixton Academy in 2002, and we started performing in regional markets all over the UK. We went from theatres to arenas to Wembley Stadium."

Crucially, no steps were skipped in territories, even when some lagged behind others. Often, Pink found herself as a multi-platinum act pin-wheeling between venue sizes.

"Roger had me doing clubs, and then I worked up to theatres and then, overseas, I worked up to arenas, and I would still come back to America and be doing clubs, like the 930 Club," she laughs. "And then at the same time, I would do arenas, and then I would do Dingwalls. It was this very humbling thing, but I got to hone [my skills]. We just pounded the pavement."

John Fleckenstein insists that it's important to keep in mind how unique this was, especially for the time.

"She put the work in, and Roger also deserves an enormous amount of credit for it," he says. "When she took a pivot on [third album] Try This, the American market wasn't accepting of the music and so she pivoted overseas. Roger put her on European festivals, which seems regular now because everybody does festivals, whatever genre you're in, right? But back then, they were the bastion of rock music, period. People were saying, 'You're crazy, she's a pop artist, you can't put her on European festivals like Rock Am Ring!' But he did. And she showed that she could actually pull that off. It transformed her international career."

There have been many pivotal live moments. Roger Davies fondly recalls her sets at V Festival, Isle Of Wight and her BRITs medley in 2019. Barrie Marshall peels off a list covering everything from La Scala in 2002 ("Everyone knew that here was an artist that was incredibly special," he says) to the Camden Dingwalls underplay in 2006, Madison Square Garden and the resolute

"Pink's a trailblazer, there's no one like her"

DAVID DOLLIMORE, RCA

PHOTOS: Mauricio Santana, Michael Tran/Stringer, Michael Ochs Archives, Kevin Winter, Getty Images

That Pinking feeling: *Pink plays Rock In Rio Festival in 2019 and (insets, top to bottom) being inducted into The Hollywood Walk Of Fame, performing Lady Marmalade with Lil' Kim, Mya and Christina Aguilera at the 2001 MTV Movie Awards and at the MTV VMAs in 2000*

"You can tell when an artist doesn't care on stage, and it's offensive – don't take people's money and stand there with your hands in your pocket!"
PINK

"triumph" of her Wembley Stadium shows in 2019.

"She broke records in Australia – it was something like 60 arenas or something absurd," adds John Fleckenstein, still bewildered. "It was unbelievable. We were like, 'How is this even happening?'"

If there was one crucial moment, however, it was the gorgeously choreographed 2010 Grammys performance of Glitter In The Air.

"I think most of America remembers it as this 'A-ha!' moment," he says. "The impact that performance had on America, really, was that moment of like, 'Oh, yeah, this next chapter of Alecia is going to be gigantic.'"

"She performed it with such grace," says Barrie Marshall. "The whole world watched with awe and saw the magic."

When it comes to the live campaign for Trustfall in the UK, the Pink Summer Carnival world tour is set to take in two nights each at the University Of Bolton Stadium, Sunderland Stadium Of Light and BST Hyde Park London, plus a date at Birmingham's Villa Park.

"These UK stadium shows in the summer are the best marketing tool we could have because the next day social media and TikTok will be populated by performance clips," says David Dollimore. "It's going to be internet fire."

As for what Pink has in store for the shows?

"It's all here," she says, pointing directly into her skull. "I haven't climbed on anything yet, but it's *aaaaaall* here."

Moving into 2023, Pink is in the strongest position of her entire career. So, as the artist who once recorded an album called Missundaztood, just how well understood does Pink actually feel as an artist these days?

"13 or 14%?" she grins.

Really, that low?

"For anyone that's been with me for a while, I feel like we're all growing up together," she explains. "Those people? I'd say 95% know me in and out. They know my intentions, what I stand for, my sense of humour, all that. The rest of the world? Not at all."

In 2017, ahead of the release of Beautiful Trauma – a 2x platinum UK No.1, selling 605,669 copies to date – she told the New York Times that she's always been ducking under the wave of pop discourse compared to some of her peers. Over five years – and two Wembley Stadium shows – on from saying that, where is she in relation to the wave now? Still ducking under or surfing?

"I think I'm at the bar, drinking something out of a coconut!" she laughs. "Sometimes I feel like I'm in a riptide. I have no idea!"

She goes on to paint a picture of the real life of Alecia Moore: dropping her kids off at school, making sure they're not late, trying to stuff her daughter's bike into the back of her car, all while hoping she can make it to yoga later in the evening. It turns out that ducking under the wave while also being one of the biggest stars on the planet is working.

"I'm pretty happy about it," she concludes. "It's what helps me sustain what I'm able to do, it's not a big, bright star that's gonna burn out. I just want to suck the marrow out of the bones of this for as long as possible."

THE Music Week INTERVIEW

HAZEL SAVAGE

In recent years, **Hazel Savage** has become something of a face for AI across the music business. As co-founder of **Musiio**, she is changing the game in tech, so much so that **SoundCloud** snapped up the company in May last year. To celebrate the achievements of the winner of the Entrepreneur Award at the **Music Week Women In Music Awards** 2022, we meet Savage for a discussion that takes in technology, diversity and what's next for the industry's relationship with artificial intelligence...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY **PHOTOS:** ALISON EMERICK

The business of artificial intelligence can be an emotive subject, ironically enough. But Hazel Savage is quick to put its most frequent criticism to bed.

"We're not here to replace humans," insists Savage, who co-founded AI music curator Musiio. "We got that argument at Musiio when we started and it all came from a place of fear and misunderstanding. But there has been progress – I come across very few people now who say 'all AI is terrible'. Those people are starting to sound like those who used to say 'all synthesisers are terrible, they're not real music,' so it's definitely heading in the right direction."

The softening stance towards AI across the board is testament to the strides made by the likes of Savage, whose company was acquired by SoundCloud last May. The ebullient Darlington-born innovator joined the board of B2B streaming technology specialist Tuned Global last October and is also a musician. Her twin passions shine through in a 90-minute conversation with *Music Week*.

"I think I'm just naturally curious," she says. "I was born in '83, so I am what they call an 'elder millennial.' I remember growing up not having a mobile phone. I'd go to meet my friends in town and say, 'I'll see you there at 10,' and you'd just have to be there, right? But also, I got my first computer when I was 11, so I was able to type and use the internet as a child. I'm part of the micro-generation that got both, which is fascinating. Luckily, I'm just young enough to be a digital native so I've always found various bits and pieces of tech relatively easy."

Musiio's technology focuses on B2B audio reference search (an AI that can effectively "listen" to music), automated tagging and playlisting tools. Its Segment Select API tool, meanwhile, finds the best 30, 45 or 60 seconds of any track for uploading to TikTok, Instagram Stories and YouTube Shorts.

"Musiio By SoundCloud is an artificial intelligence looking to add metadata to the industry," says Savage. "If you have a large catalogue, if you need to search, sort, tag or playlist any of your audio, then Musiio is the data technology that can help you do that. There is so much music, you don't know what you have – and the alternative to Musiio is that you just have nothing."

While she's made her name as a techy, Savage reveals she is also a Trekkie – her last band were called Garak in a nod to the Star Trek character Elim Garak ("I was heavily into watching Deep Space Nine at the time," she chuckles, "that definitely does not make me sound cool!"). Previously, she was the guitarist in punk outfit Ginkinta.

"We had a Spinal Tap-like rotating number of bass players," she laughs. "I'm still good friends with the drummer to this day. We were very much about being easy to Google – the only thing that comes up are results about our band."

Savage's music credentials are underpinned by her early days in retail at HMV's historic Oxford Street branch, but her first steps on the music tech ladder came courtesy of an opening at a then fledgling Shazam.

"I was employee number 25," she remembers. "It was the year before the iPhone launched and I applied for that job to get out of retail. I loved my job at HMV, but working in retail is a tough gig – members of the public are challenging. The job at Shazam said, 'No experience needed, full training given,' and they were just looking for someone who was passionate about music. My official title was digital music encoder, I was one of the people who was putting the music on the system to be Shazamed. It was a time of huge change, but really fascinating."

In 2011, Savage relocated to Sydney to work as a content manager and online producer for Universal Music Australia after being headhunted on LinkedIn, but it is not a time she remembers fondly. Last year, over 50 Australian music companies – including Universal Music Australia – apologised in a joint letter of acknowledgement in response to the damning findings of an independent review into the prevalence of sexual harm, harassment and discrimination.

"Without being too specific, it was generally a very toxic atmosphere," says Savage. "It was toxic in that people were not very nice, which I found difficult to deal with when I was 26."

Savage also served as a videographer for the Australian Chamber Orchestra and in marketing at Pandora before departing Australia for Singapore in 2016 for an 18-month stint as product marketing lead for social music platform BandLab. The impetus for launching her own business came thereafter when she was introduced to her future Musiio co-founder, Swedish AI expert Aron Pettersson, through Singapore start-up incubator Entrepreneur First (EF).

"You join as an individual, find a co-founder on the programme and then workshop ideas together," she explains. "I'd always thought I'd like to start my own company and that, 'One day I'll have an idea, then I'll do it,' but it turns out it doesn't really work like that. It's not a lightning bolt of inspiration, you sit

"AI still intimidates people, but if I can be the friendlier face of the technology, then it makes it more approachable"

HAZEL SAVAGE

Not your Musiio: *Hazel Savage was a winner at the Music Week Women In Music Awards in 2022*

down and say, 'What are the challenges in an industry? What things would have helped in my previous jobs? What are the latest technical solutions that could solve these problems?' Also, I knew I would need a technical co-founder if I were to build a technical business. EF provided those two things in abundance, so it was a good fit. It's only a three to six-month programme, so it felt like a very small time investment for potentially a big outcome."

The rest, as they say, is history. Musiio was valued at $10 million following a round of funding in July 2021 and Savage and Pettersson were appointed SoundCloud VP, music intelligence and VP, AI and machine learning (ML), respectively, in the wake of its acquisition last year. The company's president Eliah Seton presented Savage with the Entrepreneur Award at the 2022 Music Week Women In Music Awards in November.

"When I got up to claim my award I was genuinely quite nervous and I hadn't felt that way for at least five years," beams Savage. "I was so happy and excited when I got the call. It's without a doubt the biggest thing that I've ever won."

Now living in Leeds, Savage, who often spends her weekends helping her sister sell her handmade jewellery at craft fairs, is enjoying life under the SoundCloud umbrella.

"We're the AWS to their Amazon, that's how I think of it," she suggests. "We're the tech solution that a well-known company sells, and I'm entirely focused on making sure people understand that Musiio being bought hasn't switched the tech off for the rest of the world. It's also about being that ambassador between the technology and the music industry, so people understand it's not a faceless entity. It's not a wicked AI trying to take over the world, it's a technology that can be incredibly beneficial when harnessed correctly."

We talk as January cranks into gear, and Savage has a clear goal for the year ahead.

"I want to be more present in the industry," she posits. "To make sure people know we're here, how they can work with us and do a lot of profile-raising for SoundCloud in the UK."

And so, without further ado, Savage dives deeper into AI, reflects on being a female entrepreneur in male-dominated industries and considers whether she's (in her own words) more of a "prophet or a dunce"...

First up, how did the SoundCloud deal come about?

"They were a client, although it wasn't public knowledge. For about a year-and-a-half, they were licensing our technology and generating their own data, so we always knew they would potentially be interested. We had numerous acquisition offers over the four years we ran the business – that's just part of the way our particular industry works. I was never against selling; I'm not super-protective. For me, it was being protective about the clients and making sure what we built wasn't just going to get mothballed into a bigger business. The sale had to be something that could help genuinely grow what we were doing and take us to the next level. SoundCloud has kept the whole team, they've kept the technology and that, to me, is the best outcome."

What did you learn from the sale process?

"It's an incredibly difficult legal, financial and technical diligence process. I had 13 investors on my [capitalisation] table at the time I sold, and making sure that everyone agreed was a big challenge. The final sale document was over 100 pages and I'd read every single line many times over. It was incredibly challenging, but a real high as well."

So are you done with founding new companies now?

"As soon as you've sold a company, the first thing you say is,

"A lot of my investors said they found women to be more upfront and honest, with less smoke and mirrors, which was a nice compliment"

HAZEL SAVAGE

'I'm never doing that again,' and then after about four weeks you're like, 'I might do it again.' They say with childbirth you forget how difficult, painful and emotional it was very quickly and I think it's the same with selling companies, so I don't think I could ever truly say that I'd definitely never do it again. I'm very happy in my current role and to me it's just as important to be the custodian for the transfer of the technology and make sure everything is running as it should be and can continue to do so. But never say never."

Will you be involved in the evolution of SoundCloud's fan-powered royalties initiative?
"I can't wait to see what comes next in terms of evolving it. I think it's going to move from just being fan-powered royalties to being fan-powered SoundCloud. What are the other areas of the business that we're going to be able to evolve in a similar disruptive, but artist and fan-first way? I'm not an economist, so I certainly wouldn't want anyone to sign me up to run the numbers or build a couple of different economic models. But when I think about how we can expand it to the rest of the business, how can I not think of how Musiio technology can help? If fan-powered SoundCloud involves giving artists more information about their audio, that is certainly something I'm going to want to be a part of."

After you won the Women In Music Award, we spoke about the idea of "using technology at scale to connect the artist and fan together". How do you see that happening?
"From a Musiio perspective, we can add a lot of metadata to tracks. And when you've got 350 million-plus tracks on your platform – as SoundCloud does – understanding what you have is crucial. These days, anyone can get on GarageBand and release their music via a paid platform or a free distributor and it's great, but it does mean there's a lot of music available. It's harder to playlist, it's harder to curate, it's harder to search and, as a platform, it's harder to know what you have. That is the challenge I see Musiio addressing as part of SoundCloud this year, and it's part of where I think the value will lie. Building something from a tech perspective is always a question of scale. So we've built some interesting internal tools in the first six months and we've embedded the whole team, but there's certainly going to be a lot more exciting things coming out this year."

How can the industry solve its problem of categorising the volume of music being made today?
"This was another reason we were so excited to join forces with SoundCloud. As a standalone company, we were identifying 84 genres and were able to categorise everyone's catalogue with a 90-98% accuracy, so it was all very positive. But what we see on SoundCloud that we don't see as a standalone company is the emergence of new genres and sub-genres of music. As Musiio, we didn't own a catalogue, we just used our tech on our clients' catalogues, so you're limited in how advanced your data can become. But at SoundCloud, with access to music that's being uploaded, you're able to build much more advanced technology that's able to spot these trends and bring them to the fore, rather than wait until they get enough traction that they bubble up. Being able to use pattern recognition and technology to identify nascent scenes is really exciting."

Tech that: *Hazel Savage at She Loves Tech in Singapore in 2019 (top), with Musiio staff in the same year and (bottom) speaking at Mondo NYC*

As the face of Musiio, you've been getting lots of attention of late. Why do you feel that is?
"I think it's a couple of things. I've been head down building a business for the last four years and I'm only now lifting my head to have a little look around. To be honest, there are so few women building start-ups and I suppose I've chosen a very specific niche – there aren't a ton of female peers in music technology. AI still intimidates a lot of people and if I can be the slightly friendlier face of the technology versus, 'Why don't you just read this academic study?', it makes it more approachable and appealing."

How useful was your background as a musician when it came to making your mark in business?
"It's been such a helpful thread through my entire career. If you've been an artist at any level, it's because you really love it – it's almost like a secret handshake among musicians. Being a performer never pays in the beginning, it's a real time commitment and it forms part of who someone is. There is some scepticism about big tech people coming in thinking they can make money off the back of the music industry without knowing much about music, and start-ups are often not successful for that reason. So I think if you're a musician, it brings legitimacy and the right basis of knowledge to help build the industry up."

In terms of role models, who has inspired you?
"This is a difficult one, because I've had a little bit of a paucity on the inspirational bosses side, especially when it comes to female bosses. This sounds terrible, but I've often been more inspired by some of the really horrific bosses I've had – and most of them have been male, unfortunately. I had a boss who threw me under the bus once. I've had somebody scream in my face. I've had somebody go to HR and try and leverage getting me fired from a company. I'm not going to name names but, more than anything, those people taught me that that was the opposite of what I wanted to be. At Musiio, we had a 'no-yelling' policy, because I just can't imagine any scenario where anyone needs to yell at anyone else. We're not curing cancer, we're not saving lives, we're in the music industry. And if you're not enjoying it, you're not doing it properly."

How do you reflect on the challenges and barriers to entry for women and minority founders?
"I feel like I was quite lucky because a lot of my investors said that they prefer to invest in women. They find women to be a little bit more upfront and honest, or direct about the numbers and that there were less smoke and mirrors, which was a nice compliment and I found it to be true. I faced more sexism as a musician than I did as a founder, but maybe it's a low bar."

What do you hope to see more of in terms of improving the environments for women across the industry?
"I've been very open about what's happening at labels in Australia because I feel I can be, but I dodged that question for years because you can't build a start-up and pull the house of cards down at the same time. Now it's no longer a secret, it's great to be able to be open about that and not have to hide what an

PHOTOS: Hazel Savage

awful experience it was for most people. There are probably still more companies out there who haven't had their reckoning and I would like those people to be worried that women en masse are coming for them as well, because I think it builds better, less toxic environments. So I'm excited to see the industry evolve into a healthier work environment. I'm also excited to see more women come together to build companies."

How does SoundCloud create a supportive environment?

"Having a lot of women in leadership is important. Somebody I'm a huge fan of is Ama Walton, who is a senior executive based in the Berlin office. Also, by having Antonious Porch in the US as the head of diversity and inclusion, it shows that SoundCloud takes it seriously. There are also employee resource groups: Women In Engineering, a mentorship scheme called Time To Thrive and a series of organised programmes to help women learn from other women in the business. There are a lot of initiatives, but I love that they have those people in place to support that growth."

What toll does your work take on your mental health and what eases the pressure?

"As a founder, you're just so all-in. People say in most jobs, 'You can walk away. Don't answer your phone when you're not in work hours. Make sure you switch off,' and all that is true and good advice. But none of that is applicable if it is your name above the door and the buck stops with you, so that can be hard to manage. You need an incredible amount of resilience, but I never found it overwhelming or [bad for] my mental health. Because the buck stops with you, that also means you're in charge, so you have the ability to put things in place that support not only yourself, but the whole team. My main advice would be to make sure you're doing something that you love, and that's how I feel about the music industry. I don't think I would ever work in anything else and because I love what I do so much, it never really feels like a great hardship. If I didn't have the same passion, I might not have the same resilience."

Turning to AI, what sets Musiio apart from the rest of the sector?

"We have the yin and the yang. My background before I started Musiio was 12 years in the music industry, so I knew what we could do legally. I knew the people in the business and I knew what was going to add value. And my co-founder had 12 years of experience building AI for various tech firms and gaming and online companies. Musiio is the perfect Venn diagram of our skills. Where some of the competition has not succeeded – or not succeeded as quickly – is if they are lacking in one of those two departments. We were able to move that much quicker and have that much more trust from both the tech and industry sides."

Do you feel threatened by any of the new companies in the space?

"Well, luckily, I've sold the business so I don't have to feel threatened by anyone! But I never felt threatened by them anyway because I am a big believer that a rising tide lifts all boats. When a company would come out with a similar sounding offering, even when we were independent, I saw it as a positive. You should be more worried if you're running a company and nobody else is doing what you're doing, because that means nobody else thinks it's worth doing. I'm also a big believer in trying to work with other companies. If we all work together, we'll get a better outcome than if we're antagonistic. Collaboration is the way to go, 100%."

Eyes on the prize: *Hazel Savage at the Music Week Women In Music Awards with (clockwise from top) staff from SoundCloud and Musiio, Shoobs exec Christine Osazuwa and Eliah Seton, SoundCloud president*

Does the rest of the music industry take AI seriously enough?

"When we started Musiio in 2018, people were much more sceptical, and then in the last two years of building the business there was a definite shift. You need to have enough time for things to grow and for people to become comfortable. It's a journey and I feel like it will adjust more over the next two years."

Is there one thing you want everyone in the business to know about AI?

"That it's not sentient, it's not some all-encompassing power. I find it a bit easier to talk about the limitations of AI because when people understand what it can't do, it seems a lot less threatening. And the reality is that AI, in its current state, can't really do anything you haven't taught it. At Musiio, our technology has the appearance of magic, because it's so quick and clever. But there's nothing magic going on, it's very simple, high performance computing and pattern recognition that gives the appearance of intelligence. I think that's something that people need to understand."

What will be the next big things to come out of this sector?

"I always feel like the 'next big thing' will be something we haven't anticipated, but I'm super fascinated with source separation that uses AI. People have been familiar with source separation – the ability to remove a vocal from a track or separate the guitar, the bass and the drums – for a while, but it's never been good enough to have anything usable at the end of it. But now, there is a company in the US, AudioShake, which has genuinely solved something that no one else has been able to. They're helping big music companies get syncs by being able to remove vocals from tracks and create instrumental versions, so the next frontier for me is source separation. I'm still a little bit sceptical of AI-generated music – one thing I noticed at Musiio when I was going in to meet with labels or publishers was that there was very little demand for it. So I still see a disconnect between the demand for AI-generated music and the amount of AI-generated music there is."

Which brings us to our final question. You previously told us that you thought AI-generated music was "impressive academically" but that we weren't "always considering the ethical impact on songwriters, although, who knows, in 10 years I'll either be seen as a prophet or a dunce for that statement!" What's the verdict so far?

"Erm, more of a prophet I think. If it carries on like it is, AI music will go nowhere and people will not really want it. Human beings love to create music, so it doesn't need to be disrupted [by AI]. However, there could be an unknown leap in technology. And if we suddenly see that huge leap in the way we did from a regular mobile phone to a smartphone, or from music downloads to music streaming, I'll probably be seen as a dunce. But so far, I'm more on the prophet side!"

PHOTOS: Musiio, Tina Korhonen

"At Musiio, our technology has the appearance of magic, but it's just simple computing and people need to understand that"

HAZEL SAVAGE

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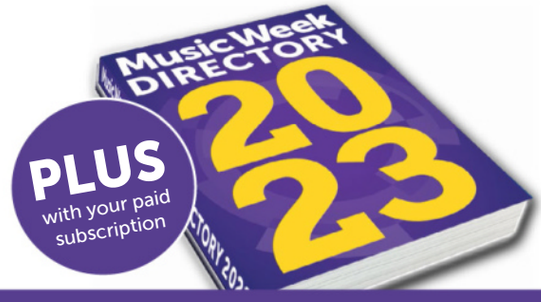

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CURATED BY GIR'S CARLA MARIE WILLIAMS

MUSIC WEEK X GIRLS I RATE PRESENTS

MENTOR ME

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL AND SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE ACROSS THE MUSIC AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SHARE THEIR TOP 5 CAREER LESSONS...

PARRIS OH (ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER, TIKTOK)

As TikTok's artist partnerships manager, Parris OH helps artists gain exposure on the platform, working with stars such as Dreya Mac, Cat Burns, ArrDee, Tion Wayne and Digga D. As well as heading up TikTok's #Rap discovery tag launch, in 2022 they were behind the first UK rap Live show, Oi TikTok, featuring artists like Potter Payper and Ms Banks. With nearly 15 years of experience, Parris OH has worked both independently and for major record labels, won *Music Week's* 2018 Rising Star Award and has been an integral part of global artist campaigns that represent, curate and nurture Black British talent. Here, they share their top tips for TikTok success...

1. Be authentic

"Authenticity is key. Using TikTok as an artist doesn't mean just lip syncing hooks and doing dances. It's about engaging content that has a relatability to it. So if you're into cooking, fashion or books, show that! Give your audience an insight into your studio sessions, a day-in-the-life, morning routines or performance 'behind-the-scenes'. Promoting your music is most important, but artists are creative people. By showing your personality, people might connect, follow you, explore your page and discover your music, leading to a stream. An insight into who you are creates quality content for people to enjoy and a gateway for a growing audience on TikTok."

2. Use the features available

"Make sure you're maximising the app's potential. Features such as filters, Duet, Stitch, Points Of Interest and the editing suite are right at your fingertips. Use them! Incorporate new things into your content. Also, a few housekeeping tips: make sure your captions are spelt correctly, use no more than three to five relevant hashtags on your content and use official sounds from the sounds page. Engage with comments, try a video reply or part two of a story and encourage a community around your content. Using features will lead to a deeper understanding of how your content can work for you."

3. Spend time on the app

"Get to know the platform. There are endless communities and spaces for everyone on TikTok. Curate your For You Page by following people you're interested in, other artists, liking content you're inspired by and searching hashtags. Save edited content in your drafts, this is a great way to have regular content to post without having to film every day. Explore hashtags, especially genre-led ones. Last year we launched #Rap, #AltMusic and #ElectronicMusic, which serve as the go-to discovery hubs for those genres. Updated hashtags and campaigns can be found in our weekly newsletter too. Make TikTok work for you, a personalised platform is an interesting platform, so delve in."

4. Fail forward

"Try new things! If a piece of content doesn't achieve the views you want, that's okay, it won't take away from anything else you'll put out. Learn from it. Each time you post, a new audience sees it. Some may not have heard of you before, but that leaves endless possibilities for an audience to engage with your content from different angles. If it doesn't work, try something else! When you see consistency in numbers from a particular approach, dig into that and do more."

5. Be consistent!

"Consistency is key, but artist burnout is real. Let's dispel the myth of having to post three times a day, every day, in order to get into the algorithm. If you are new to the platform try posting twice a week. As you learn what works for you, build up to three or four times a week. TikTok is about enjoyment first, and there are huge benefits to regular posting, but make sure it works in a healthy way for you."

"Make TikTok work for you, a personalised platform is an interesting platform"
PARRIS OH

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SETTIN
THE TO

According to its UK boss **Shaurav D'Silva**, anyone searching for an independent publishing success story in 2023 should look no further than **Stellar Songs**. It's three years since the executive merged his **2-Tone Entertainment** firm with **Tim Blacksmith** and **Danny D**'s company, and business is booming. Here, *Music Week* meets him to discuss the future of A&R, why gut feeling always trumps data and the UK's bid to uncover the next global superstars...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY **PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES

The Matrix Complex in Parsons Green in West London is a hive of music industry excellence. Prince, The Rolling Stones and Coldplay have recorded inside its walls. Fraser T Smith had a studio there for years. Modest! Management and Closer Artists call it home.

"It's one of those buildings that looks pretty innocuous from the outside, but it's like a maze," 2-Tone Entertainment CEO Shaurav D'Silva tells *Music Week*. "It's well known for music in South West London. I've been based here on and off for the last 10 years."

D'Silva has earned his place among such esteemed company. The cool, calm and collected exec founded 2-Tone as a management enterprise almost 20 years ago and speedily expanded into publishing. Hooking up with 3Beat in 2009 as an A&R, D'Silva guided an eclectic roster of acts at the label from Sigma to Fuse ODG.

"I was a DJ and promoter in my teens and 20s so I spent a lot of time in nightclubs, which gave me a very instinctive understanding about what moved people," he muses, settling down for a chat on a crisp January morning. "That became a key part of my thought process when I listened to songs and made music with creatives."

Departing 3Beat after eight years, he launched 2TE Records under Warner's umbrella, working alongside Max Lousada and Phil Christie with a roster including US rapper Saweetie, among others. Then, in 2020, he formed another JV, this time with US-based Tim Blacksmith and Danny D's Stellar Songs. D'Silva went back a decade with the duo, having worked with them as publishers for his management clients.

"When I went to Warner in 2017, they really showed genuine support and guidance in helping me navigate the challenge of running a record label on my own for the first time," he recalls. "The mutual passion we all had for new music – in particular great songwriters and producers – meant that we always talked about collaborating more in the future."

Once the Warner partnership had ended, D'Silva formed an alliance with Stellar that meant he could move into publishing while maintaining his management and records business.

"We are all one family now," he explains. "I run the Stellar Songs operation in the UK, as well as running 2-Tone."

Stellar 2.0 was barely out of the starting blocks when it had its first crisis to contend with – the small matter of a pandemic – but the team rallied to make the best of a bad situation.

"We're coming up to three years now and it's been a really enjoyable but also challenging process," reflects D'Silva. "Learning how to adapt to a new way of working, especially with Tim and Danny being based in LA, and trying to build a team that couldn't spend very much time together initially was definitely a challenge."

Lockdown did, however, allow team Stellar to "get more creative and stuck into the DNA of what the brand is" says D'Silva.

Last year was a dream, with Blacksmith and Danny D (real name Daniel Poku) both honoured with MBEs for services to music, while their company – which represents the works of artists including Sam Smith, Labrinth and Charli XCX – made the shortlist for Independent Publisher Of The Year at the Music Week Awards.

"It was a big goal of mine for Stellar to start getting the credit as an independent publisher rather than being seen as some form of extension of a major," says D'Silva. "Carving out the identity within the industry was something that I felt was important. I think, in general, the understanding and visibility of what we do has increased."

Recent highlights are many. Plenty of plaudits greeted Charli XCX's

D'Silva service: *Shaurav D'Silva, photographed for Music Week in London, January 2023*

VG NE

"Breaking is not just about music and songs, it's essential for artists to have an entrepreneurial spirit"

SHAURAV D'SILVA

"Publishing has undergone a facelift in the way people see it, it feels more and more like this is where records are being made now"

SHAURAV D'SILVA

On Song: *Stellar Songs UK execs (clockwise from top left) Garry Pape, Janelle Fraser, Ella Ryan, Derek Amedume, Shaurav D'Silva and Marissa Rodney*

2022 No.1 LP Crash (42,614 sales, according to the Official Charts Company), songwriters Jessica Agombar and David Stewart teamed up with Olly Murs on his recent chart-topping Marry Me album (32,171 sales) and Sam Smith is on the crest of a wave with Kim Petras collaboration Unholy (687,513 sales).

"Unholy is a phenomenon," grins D'Silva. "It came out towards the end of last year, so it didn't quite hit the top spot for the biggest-selling record because of when it landed. But I think before the end of this year, we're going to really see quite how big that record is."

In 2021, Blacksmith and Poku re-signed Smith via a JV with Warner Chappell and the star's fourth album Gloria is expected to be huge. D'Silva's enthusiasm is clear to see, particularly given that Stargate (who is managed by Blacksmith and Poku) co-produced Smith's latest single Gimme (feat. Koffee & Jessie Reyez).

"We're so happy for Sam and delighted to have been involved from the beginning all the way to the new era, which is just Sam being completely honest about who they are and making records that not only showcase their voice incredibly, but are fun and cutting edge, too," says D'Silva.

Elsewhere, Jessica Agombar won the Music Creative gong at last year's Music Week Women In Music Awards.

"Jess is a force," asserts D'Silva. "She's very ambitious and hardworking with an incredible ability to make artists feel really comfortable and relaxed," he says.

He reveals that Agombar has "big plans" in America, where she's been working with Shania Twain, Jennifer Lopez and The Scarlet Opera. In the UK, she is writing with Mimi Webb and Ava Max.

Agombar signed to production house Xenomania at the beginning of her career, going on to sign to Atlantic as an artist and join British girl group Parade, who landed a Top 10 hit with debut single Louder. As a songwriter, she partnered with Stewart to co-write BTS' 2020 juggernaut Dynamite.

She tells *Music Week* that Stellar has been crucial to her success.

"It has always felt like a family," Agombar says. "What makes me feel happiest to be signed there is their way of catering to each songwriter's needs and path. I'm proud of their legacy and also feel supported in the UK, the US and anywhere else my writing trips take me."

D'Silva describes Agombar's trajectory as "amazing" and the overwhelming sense is that, like the story of the company itself, it's entering a bright new era.

To shape Stellar 2.0, D'Silva has assembled a formidable A&R team headed by Derek Amedume and including Marissa Rodney, Ella Ryan, Garry Pape and Black Music Coalition 2022 Excellence Honouree Janelle Fraser. He lists their guiding principles as "true talent, passion for your art, tenacity and self-belief," adding that they encourage everyone on the roster to be "brave and groundbreaking".

D'Silva says that the success of Stellar's acts has helped drive additions to both the roster and the team.

Amedume formerly served at 2-Tone as head of A&R and was at First Access Entertainment before that, while Rodney arrived from Syco and Pape came in from Polydor.

"Ella Ryan is a new A&R that we've taken on recently and Janelle Fraser has been at Stellar for a while and her relationships in rap, dancehall and Afrobeats are really important," adds D'Silva proudly. "She's also signed a brilliant young singer-songwriter called Maya Lane."

The team is indicative of a wider image shift within publishing, he suggests, with perceptions changing radically as the sector presents an ever more appealing entry point for younger generations.

"Publishing has definitely gone through a facelift in the way people see it," offers D'Silva. "I have heard more and more that publishing feels like where the records are being made now, and I would agree. There are obviously some brilliant A&Rs at record companies, but a lot of them are under huge pressure to follow data. With the number of records that are being released, it's hard not to have to find a filter to figure out who has momentum or real traction."

Stellar, D'Silva says, goes against the grain.

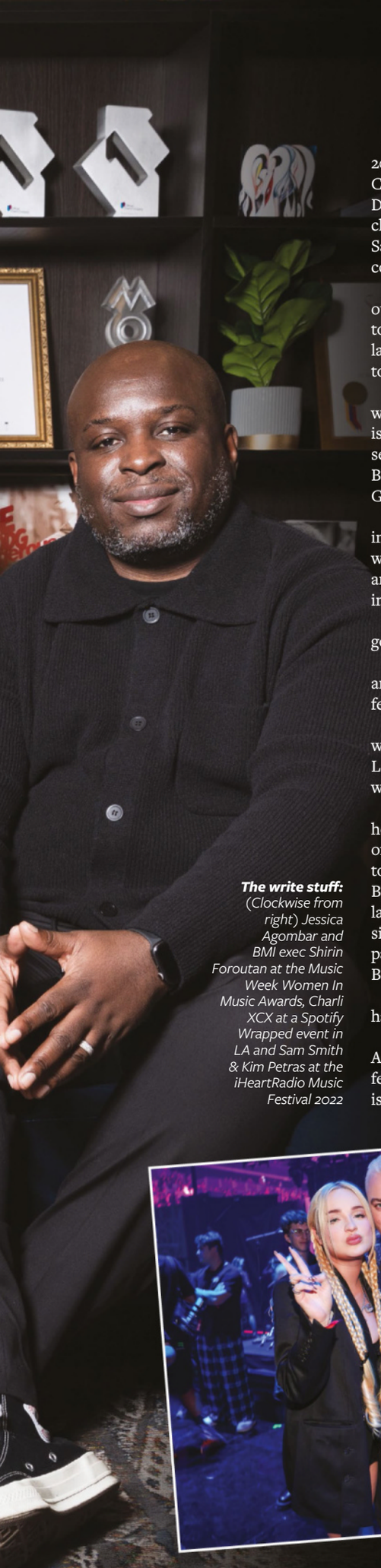
"Tim and Danny have been very much the pioneers of what I would call 'creative A&R publishing' in terms of how hands-on they are and how artist-friendly their relationships are," he says. "I think the conversations that artists have with their publishers feel a little bit more open and honest and relaxed than with record companies because of the pressure they may feel to deliver hits."

Stellar's new team prioritises finding new signings based on talent, rather than data or market share, a fact D'Silva says is part of the firm's DNA.

"We've brought in experience, but also young and dynamic individuals and we're excited about their potential to do some damage in publishing," he states. "Our recruitment has been based around love for talent and creativity, but also gut feelings about who they think is going to make an impact."

Existing relationships aid the discovery process, too.

"Finding talent is a combination of relationships with managers, A&Rs and lawyers," he says. "We're very fortunate to have great relationships with all of



The write stuff: *(Clockwise from right) Jessica Agombar and BMI exec Shirin Foroutan at the Music Week Women In Music Awards, Charli XCX at a Spotify Wrapped event in LA and Sam Smith & Kim Petras at the iHeartRadio Music Festival 2022*

PHOTOS: Michael Kovac, Christopher Polk, Getty

our writers; they tell us who they've been working with and we pay great interest in the records that come back to us. There's a lot of ground-level digging and intel, but instinct is a vital thing in our company. Data only becomes a tool in the final stages of the process. We're all about trusting our gut on a creative's ability to navigate a room and the industry, and that usually comes from an in-person meeting."

He harks back to Stellar's past to emphasise the point.

"With Tim And Danny, whether it was Labrinth, Emeli Sandé or Sam Smith, there was no data," he says. "It was walking into a studio, hearing a voice, hearing a song, being blown away and wanting to hear more."

Time is of the essence when it comes to competing against the majors, although sometimes even that is not enough to seal the deal.

"We have to get there early," affirms D'Silva. "The pressures of the majors' business makes it hard for us – we're definitely one of those publishers that when we're in for a deal, people automatically jump in and we're used to that. We trust that the work we've done with the writers prior to everyone else hearing about them will get those deals over the line, but sometimes we lose out and people go to where the biggest cheque is. But it's a relationships business and, in the end, creatives work with people that they feel can add value to their careers and really care about what they are doing."

D'Silva underlines the value and importance of operating independently.

"Being independent means that we're not chasing market share or trying to please shareholders on chart positions by snapping up writers that have 15% of a hit record," he says. "We want to make sure that with everyone we sign, we can really take them through the process and the industry in a way where we can genuinely add value. And ideally, they have global ambition, because the whole reason for this set-up with us here in the UK, and Tim and Danny in the US, is to make sure our writers are thinking on a global level from the get-go."

With the shortage of British acts breaking worldwide an increasingly troubling subject for many within the UK record business, D'Silva admits to harbouring concerns on the issue.

"The stats that I've seen thrown around are quite alarming," he concedes. "But as publishers, our job is to encourage our writers and creatives not just to think globally, but also just to really think about their artistry, their brand identity and the message they want to share with the world. Our approach towards the progress of their careers, in terms of breaking out above and beyond one hit or becoming real album artists, has always been about making sure that they really know who they are and stand for something, so that what they're saying has real depth and detail behind it."

D'Silva suggests the dwindling number of UK breakthroughs is related to the volume of successful local artists and the scale of established global artists that they are up against.

"I think that self-sufficient ecosystems have started to exist in their own right to such an extent that crossing someone over into another territory has become a much bigger job," he argues. "That being said, there are some great examples – Central Cee's success as an independent artist is phenomenal. And Raye is another that has really stepped forward and shown the world that if you take matters into your own hands, as it were, you can really change the nature of your career by just being brave and putting out records that you believe in."

Moreover, D'Silva believes the lack of breakthroughs does not signify a lack of talent.

"I'm not worried about the talent," he insists. "It's more about the quality of the music they are making stacking up on a world stage and the strategy of how you go about connecting these artists in territories where they're not necessarily based. And the process of doing that."

D'Silva also posits that the trend for viral moments and rapid breakouts should be seen as a useful tool for the business.

"I think the major labels now are more wowed by artist breakouts than ever, because it means that half the job is done in terms of the fact that they've created the momentum so that the labels can then throw some extra fuel onto the fire," he says. "That self-starting nature or entrepreneurial spirit that artists have is the thing that is most essential for them being able to break. It's not just the music and the quality of the songs, it's that spirit of being able to be a global brand."

D'Silva is enthused by Stellar's new wave, expressing high hopes for Cassyette and producer Tylr Rydr, Parlophone-signed Sad Night Dynamite, writer Lauren Keen, Island-signed Chrissi, producer KZ and the aforementioned Maya Lane.

"Our big focus this year is making sure that the Stellar 2.0 generation are being nurtured to fulfil their potential," he says. "We have a number of really exciting artists, writers and producers that we are very positive about."

Near the top of that list are Piri & Tommy, who exploded on TikTok last year. Piri is signed to Warner Chappell, while Tommy is signed to its JV with Stellar.

"They've made drum & bass fun and accessible," he adds. "It was always seen as a specialist scene but they have made it exciting and pop at the same time."

D'Silva is only too happy to lean into the opportunities TikTok has opened up, endorsing the platform as "an amazing tool" for creatives.

"It's groundbreaking and has changed the nature of the music business because it's made the public feel like they can create and interact in the way that the artist can," he says. "They can give a whole other life or meaning to music that someone else has created."

Stellar performance: *(Clockwise from top) Shaurav D'Silva with team Stellar Songs at the BMI Awards, celebrating the signing of Lauren Keen, sealing the deal with team Piri & Tommy and signing Cassyette*

PHOTOS: Stellar Songs

> “The conversations artists have with their publishers feel more open and honest than with record companies, because of the pressure they may feel to deliver hits”
>
> **SHAURAV D’SILVA**

What TikTok has highlighted most, he continues, is the power of the lyric.

“As publishers, that’s where we’re the most focused on in terms of asking, ‘What is the aim? What does it stand for?’” he says. “Then it’s about figuring out how people might use a lyric or particular phrase as a piece of content.”

Piri & Tommy’s emergence is also symbolic of a new breed – the pandemic pop star.

“Whether you call it bedroom pop or not, what the pandemic did is highlight the real creators, the ones that are able to exist in their own little world,” observes D’Silva. “Without having touring as a distraction, it meant that the attention to detail on the kinds of records they were making and the creative behind them went through the roof. Charli XCX was another one of those highly creative and self-sufficient individuals that made the most of Covid and managed to get through two albums.”

It was also during lockdown that the Black Music Coalition (BMC) formed in the wake of George Floyd’s murder. As a committed BMC member, D’Silva is full of praise for the work the organisation has done to help support young Black executives in the business. But as far as the wider industry is concerned, he stresses that creating lasting change ultimately boils down to a longstanding commitment.

“Giving people an opportunity and following through on how they grow and evolve is the most important thing for long-term development,” he says. “I’m not sure there is enough one-to-one mentoring going on, and that’s the nature of the beast with the music industry, because it’s so full-on and everyone is expected to figure it out for themselves.

“If you look at all the best executives, they will reference the people that really had time for them. So I’d like to see more of these internship programmes being a bit longer than three or six months. The support just needs to be longer term.”

D’Silva says that having his own support network when rising through the ranks was vital.

“Jon Barlow, who runs 3 Beat, was one of my first mentors,” he notes. “He was just an incredible, hands-on mentor and human being who really took the time to explain every part of the process of making a record to me, and in a very, very pure way. That was because of the nature of the genres that he operated in, which were mainly in the dance world. So that was a real baptism of fire.”

Without that early education, perhaps D’Silva wouldn’t have ended up at Stellar, where he is able to put all he’s learned along the way to use.

“My relationship with Tim and Danny has always been a cornerstone in terms of being able to have honest conversations about the quality of a song,” he says, summing up the essence of what he does before we part ways.

He might work in the Matrix, but the real world is looking just fine for D’Silva.

“The business is thriving and there are lots of brilliant companies out there doing their thing,” he concludes. “You’re seeing lots of joint ventures and partnerships and I think that is something that should be encouraged. Independent publishers are on the up...”

The power of three: *(L-R) Ryan Hope, Jacob Lusk and Ari Balouzian*

A ROYAL WELCOME

As the emerging talent debate rages on, one band is banging hardest on the door to the mainstream. With **Gabriels**, what started as word of mouth buzz has become an explosive success story, one that will soon be crowned by the release of the second part of their debut album **Angels & Queens**. *Music Week* meets the LA trio, **Jacob Lusk**, **Ari Balouzian** and **Ryan Hope,** plus **Atlas Artists**, **Parlophone** and **CAA**, to hear all about a remarkable breakthrough...

WORDS: NIALL DOHERTY

When the members of Gabriels think about their lives over the past year and a bit, their perceptions of time get a little bit skewed. It can't only be a matter of months since their show-stopping set at Glastonbury, can it? Did they really only write some of the songs that fevered crowds have been singing along to at sold-out headline gigs at the start of last year? And surely someone has been messing with the calendars if it's to be believed that their first ever gig was just over a year ago? Their diaries have not been deceiving them. It's a yes to all the above, and singer Jacob Lusk and multi-instrumentalists Ari Balouzian and Ryan Hope have been at the centre of the whirlwind.

"You don't realise how crazy it is until you take a step back and go, 'Oh wait, our first show was October 2021?!'" marvels frontman Lusk. Like his two bandmates, he's speaking from his home in California, the three of them spread across Los Angeles county. Hot on the heels of coming fifth on BBC Radio 1's Sound Of 2023 list, Lusk has just discovered that the band has been nominated for Best International Group at this year's BRITs, but he's not writing an acceptance speech just yet.

"I'm trying to be negative, we're not going to win!" he hoots. "It's just exciting to know our music is making an impact. People are listening around the world and that's special. It's a great feeling."

"The last year feels like it's been five years," adds the affable Balouzian, almost so bewildered by the thought that Sunderland native Hope picks up the thread for him.

"It was a real rollercoaster, it was just nuts," he says. "Everyone knows the best part of a rollercoaster is when it goes down. It's surreal, it's been a trip."

That's putting it lightly. Gabriels' path to becoming the breakthrough story of the moment (not to mention a favourite of Sir Elton John, who declared his fandom on his Apple Music radio show) hasn't so much been a road less travelled but more a sort of underground tunnel that everyone forgot existed. Their sound is steeped in the past at the same time as feeling like it could only be made now – a stirring and euphoric mix of soul, orchestral funk, gospel and rock, songs that try to make sense of 21st century chaos. Their launchpad to success is a modern anomaly. It hasn't happened through a TikTok moment or viral hit but by word of mouth, mainly about their thrilling live shows. They doubled down on the sense that this wasn't about a singular factor by releasing the first half of their debut album, Angels & Queens (Part 1), towards the end of last year, which will be completed with Part 2 (six new tracks plus a deluxe edition) in June. It's an astounding collection of songs. Lusk's captivating, light-in-the-dark vocals are at the centre of everything, but if he's the soul of their sound then it's the minor chord majesty of the music, all tension and restraint, that really gives these tracks their heartbeat.

All of that was there the first time the band popped up on manager and Atlas Artists founder Duncan Ellis' Spotify Discover Weekly with their self-released Love And Hate In A Different Time EP in 2020. Immediately spellbound, he assumed that they were already signed or, at the very least, had a team.

"I reached out on Instagram and didn't hear back for months," says Ellis, whose company signed a JV with Parlophone in 2021. "I kept following up and was quite persistent. Ari got back to me and things moved quickly from there."

He says his track record in breaking new artists – he's previously worked with Foals, Everything Everything, Lianne La Havas, Kodaline and more – helped convince the band that he was the right match.

The decision to release their debut album in two parts was made while Gabriels were in the studio with Kendrick Lamar producer Sounwave. Sessions were quick and productive and they wanted their release schedule to reflect a similar essence of capturing that energy.

"Releasing it in two parts made the whole thing feel fluid and exciting and dynamic," says Hope.

"It was good to get some music out a little sooner," agrees Balouzian. "It extends the ability to put singles out across an album in a weird way, we kind of have more mileage with it."

The two-part release strategy was a way to give people a chance to properly understand the narrative of the band, Parlophone co-president Nick Burgess tells *Music Week*.

"We felt like they deserved more than just another single," says Burgess. "I guess in other genres it would be called a mixtape, a lot of artists put out mixtapes and we thought, 'Let's just put out an album.'"

Such thinking matches how the band came into Parlophone in the first place.

"We signed them completely off the radar," says Burgess. "We loved the music immediately. It was in the middle of Covid so we couldn't meet them, we had to do it on Zoom. We signed them from pure passion, no data whatsoever. They are possibly the most important act I've ever worked with in 20-plus years as an A&R."

Burgess was originally apprehensive about Gabriels working with Sounwave, unsure how a self-produced act would fare with an outsider. But he says Sounwave has given them a contemporary swagger.

"If there was one thing missing from their own productions, it was that ability to make it feel like it was definitely rooted in 2023," Burgess explains. "He's brought that to them. The album is a masterpiece."

Mad things happen with Gabriels, says Burgess, revealing the label recently received an email from Steven Spielberg declaring his fandom.

"He was just saying, 'I absolutely love this band, please keep me posted on anything they do,'" Burgess says, breaking into a smile of the kind that only support from a four-time Oscar-winning director can bring. With Gabriels, the good news just keeps on coming.

> **"They could be the most important act I've worked on in 20 years as an A&R"**
> NICK BURGESS, PARLOPHONE

All this, you can imagine, has been rather a lot to take in for the band. In fact, Lusk says that their heady rise has been the best test they could possibly have had to their friendship.

"Things like this, they keep you closer or they push you further away and we are *locked*," he says.

The trio had been making music for five years before everything kicked off, having met when filmmakers Hope and Balouzian were working on an advert that featured a church choir being directed by Lusk. The duo were taken aback after hearing the singer's phenomenal voice and they began working on music together, their first breakthrough coming when they soundtracked a Prada ad made by Hope.

The band's sound wasn't planned, it just happened, they say.

"I went off at somebody on social media because they were like, 'Oh, you're trying to sound like Nina [Simone],'" says Lusk. "I was like, 'Nooo, I'm not trying to sound like anybody, fuck you!' This is the one place where I don't have to be anybody, I don't have to do what the industry wants me to do, there was no pressure to be anything."

Lusk says that making this music was like therapy for him. He was working with two guys who had little knowledge of his background and he had little of theirs. It was a clean slate.

"It was the place where I was encouraged to be myself," he says. "It was our moment to have fun and enjoy each other. We weren't trying to be famous, we weren't trying to sell a million records at that time. It was just, 'These are my bros and we're having fun.'"

The history Lusk alludes to includes growing up as a gospel singer in the Apostolic church, a career as a backing singer for Diana Ross, Beck, Nate Dogg and more and then appearing as a contestant on American Idol in 2011 (which he has previously described as "traumatic"). He's reluctant to go into details today, but says the experience shaped how he approached his role as frontman and singer in Gabriels.

"There's this song by Whitney Houston – she's the GOAT, FYI – where she says, '*When you've got friends to wish you well, you'll find a point when you will exhale*,'" he says. "When you have friends to knee you in the ribcage and be like, 'Bro, calm the fuck down, we've got your back,' then you're able to exhale. Relax and be free and you'll be alright."

Gabriels' music is often a case of in-depth discussions between them being put into songs – themes exploring love, sex, women, men, relationships, death.

"All the good things," nods Hope.

"It's all life experience," says Lusk.

"We were searching for the truth," states Balouzian. "Telling each other stories in the most interesting way possible."

The band's breakthrough track Love And Hate In A Different Time was partially written as a response to the murder of George Floyd, but Lusk thinks it's no good considering the music industry's response to Black Lives Matter in isolation, instead you need to look at the wider picture.

"I'm not gonna say the music industry, I'm gonna say the world," he says. "I think the world did what it always does – good always overcomes evil. When the George Floyd thing happened, people were protesting all over the world. I think a lot of people have woken up to some things. Everyone is doing better, the labels are doing better, places of employment are doing better."

Gabriels are all in their 30s (although Lusk jokingly maintains throughout our chat that he's 19 and the other two are ancient) and Hope says he's glad for it, because the past year has taught him how tough it is for artists breaking through.

"I have a totally different perspective on these young artists who are by themselves, they have a lot to handle," he opines. "I worked as a music video director for 15 years and I thought I knew their kinds of stresses and strains, and I was definitely humbled."

The key, continues Lusk, is that they have a solid band ecosystem where each relies on the other.

"There's always two other people to look out for stuff, because we all miss things," he explains. "It could be from content to contracts to people getting paid. I know those are little things to some people but the amount of hours we've spent on things, even something as small as styling the background singers or styling ourselves..."

"Stage design, visuals," interjects Balouzian. "We do everything pretty much in-house in terms of the creative."

They try to measure their success not by the go-to modern metrics of streams and social media numbers but by what they see in front of them: wowed crowds, queues at the merch stand and so on. They have almost 700,000 monthly followers on Spotify, a modest number given the huge excitement around the band, but Hope is of the opinion that slow and steady is the best route to success in the long-term.

"There is a business element and it does need to be grown, but sometimes when people get an element of success, all of a sudden the 'more, more, more!' thing comes in and it can really derail the creative process of making good work," he says.

Lusk believes that you can't assess them in the way you might other artists because their experience is unlike any other artists'.

"You know the saying, 'The math ain't mathin'?" he asks. "Where stuff doesn't make sense? Well, the math ain't mathin! We only have 30 or 40,000 [37,7000] followers on Instagram but all of our shows in the UK sell out. For us to be the age that we are and be a new artist, that doesn't make sense. People are like, 'Oh, only old people like your music' but that's a lie because there are kids at our shows. We can think that there's a set formula to success in the music industry, but I don't think that's true."

The singer adds that he's the member most prone to getting caught up in the stats and has to remind himself not to.

"Spotify numbers matter, yes, TikTok followers matter, me engaging on Instagram Live matters, press matters, but the minute you start to believe your own press – bullshit!" he says. "Don't believe the hype, I'll be honest, I'm the guy who gets stressed out about the numbers or if I say the wrong thing and it'll take Ari or Ryan to go, 'Fool, you out here having fun you idiot, you're living your fucking dream, what the fuck is your problem, are you stupid?!'"

Gabriels were able to tell their band was taking off from the rapturous receptions at their gigs.

"We've had these highlight moments, Elton John, [playing live on The Late Late Show with] James Corden, [supporting] Harry Styles, or when Virgil Abloh played our music," says Lusk. "But the most poignant thing is our live shows when you feel the reaction."

It was their live performance that got everybody talking during a series of shows at the Social in London in late 2021.

"It was amazing," recalls Balouzian. "We were playing our music live for the first time, it was so fresh and we just had that energy. To Duncan's credit, he brought in a lot of great musicians and crew around us early on and helped us to execute the vision we had."

ROLE CALL
MEET TEAM GABRIELS

Management: Duncan Ellis & Linda Maitland, Atlas Artists
Label: Atlas Artists/Parlophone
CEO: Tony Harlow (Warner Music UK)
Co-presidents: Nick Burgess & Mark Mitchell
General Manager: Jack Melhuish
A&R: Duncan Ellis (Atlas Artists)
Marketing: Anna Turunen & Anya Du Sauzay
Digital Marketing: Thomas Jones, Connor Cockbain & Lizzie Berchie
Publisher: Kobalt
Agent: Summer Marshall (CAA)
Print & Online Press: Jon Lawrence (Chalk Press Agency)
Radio: Grace O'Neill
TV: Natalie Nichols
Creative Director: Jamie Parkhurst

Voice of an angel: *Jacob Lusk on stage at Koko last summer and (inset) the Angels & Queens album art*

"Gabriels is the one place where I don't have to be anybody, I don't have to do what the industry wants me to do"

JACOB LUSK
GABRIELS

PHOTO: Gabriels

“People think there’s a set formula for success in this industry, but I don’t think that’s true”

JACOB LUSK GABRIELS

Manager Duncan Ellis was confident that their live show would be good but he wasn't prepared for just how much it would blow him away.

"It was something to behold," he recalls. "It's been our strongest card and live has really exploded for them. When Jacob steps on stage, it's transformative. He's a superstar frontman."

Summer Marshall, the group's agent at CAA, is similarly effusive.

"Watching them perform is one of the few times I've seen an audience moved to tears and brought to their feet with joy to dance, all within the same three-minute song," she says. "The next 18 months will be really exciting, they will be playing larger headline dates across the UK, Europe and America, headlining their first festivals and playing their first shows in Asia, Africa and Australia. There is no limit to how far they can go."

Speaking about manager Ellis, Jacob Lusk describes him as a "velociraptor".

"Yeah," agrees Hope. "You know how in Jurassic Park the velociraptor was the sexy dinosaur that will rip your head off? That's what Duncan is like. The same way he'll be on you, he's on other people like that too. He leads from the front and puts his money where his mouth is and backs us to the hilt."

Ellis says the bond he's made with the group was born from long, deep dive conversations conducted over Zoom.

"There was a lot of talking about ideas and strategy," he says. "I got to know them intimately during that time where nobody could travel."

The dynamic between Atlas and Parlophone is one where Ellis' company is essentially an A&R source, he explains, with Atlas then plugging into Parlophone's marketing, sales and promo teams.

"When I signed the deal with Max Lousada, Parlophone were going through a transition and evolution [to become] the home for new music within the Warner Group, so the fit was right," says Ellis. "Working very closely with Nick and Mitch [Mark Mitchell, co-president] has been great."

The band, too, are very appreciative of the relationship they have with their label.

"They push us to be greater and better and they rock with us," says Lusk. "They believe in us and they come to every show. I can text the head of Parlophone any time, I can text Duncan any time and he hits me right back."

Nick Burgess says that, apart from the fact that they're a flight away, there's no difference between how the label interacts with Gabriels and their UK acts. Besides, he adds, the band spend a lot of time here.

"We're a UK label and they see London as their home," he says. "Ryan is from the UK and they've got a lot of UK DNA in there. It's the same process but it's positive, it gives them a more global feel. They already have a sense of being part of a bigger picture."

He thinks that the best acts in history have never tried to fit into the system, and that's how he views Gabriels.

"They're not chasing streaming or radio, they're just word of mouth," says Burgess. "The biggest bands in the world have always belonged to the people and I believe Gabriels belong to the people."

Burgess sees Angels & Queens as a step towards a brighter future.

"I think they have got the potential to be a huge mainstream act, but it might not be on this album," he says. "I'd expect us to have a Top 10, but it's about making sure they're culturally vital. That's success to us, we need them to make an impact on culture, for this album to be recognised as an important body of work."

BBC Radio 6 Music have been big supporters so far but Ellis thinks that for the band to reach their potential, they will need daytime support from both Radio 1 and 2.

"They're very different to anything that's going on right now," he says. "So it requires people to hold their nerve, to be confident in the fact that it's unique. I think if people continue to do that, then we'll get to where we need to be at daytime radio and a bigger streaming ecosystem. I always find with quality music, things just take a little bit longer."

The group's 2022 support tour with Harry Styles, during which Lusk joined Styles onstage for his track Cinema, was important in introducing the band to a younger crowd, says Burgess.

"It gave Jacob the confidence to know that he was comfortable on stage in front of 50,000 people every night," he says. "We're just looking to get as many people to the party as possible."

Anya Du Sauzay, head of marketing at Parlophone, says that it yielded tangible results.

"We could see via social media and streaming growth that we were converting Harry fans into Gabriels fans," she states. "That proved that the band really can connect with a younger audience. They deserve worldwide recognition and that is very much our aim."

The Harry Styles shows were a life-changing experience for Jacob Lusk. He thinks some people doubted the pairing, assuming that Styles' audience wouldn't get them.

"I think it's a tell-tale sign that if it's good music, people will fuck with it," says Lusk. "Harry Styles is an incredible artist. He's also a kind person and that's reflected in his fans. They are super nice, they're open and warm. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life, I didn't want to leave. I felt like I was part of Harry's tour, like I was in Harry's band. It felt amazing."

Ryan Hope thinks that the reason their output has resonated so much across a broad audience, old and young and everything in between, is down to the candour at the heart of their music. He thinks it's something that's been lacking.

"People have warmed to us because they've been starved of the honesty of real music in recent years," he ventures. "It feels like the whole nature of popular music is to move more into this kind of entertainment-y space, like a talent thing, rather than 'this is me, the person that I am.'"

But the fact that Gabriels want to take the long road as a band, carve out a proper career and not be a flash in a plan has not dented their singer's shoot-for-the-moon ambitions.

"I want the Grammys, I want to win an Oscar, just to be clear – the acting thing is coming," effuses Lusk. "I would love to do some arias with orchestras and we want to do more music and more cool things.

"Speaking of which," he adds, now talking to his bandmates. "We need to schedule a meeting because we need to figure out the specifics for Coachella, it's going to be here sooner than you know, guys."

He turns his attention back to the interview, their set at the California festival in April can wait, for now.

"As ambitious as I am – and I'm looking at a £12 million house in Hampstead, I'm very ambitious, OK?!" he says. "But you've got to watch the ambition, remember where you are and be grateful."

More than anything, maybe even more than a posh residence in well-to-do North London, Jacob Lusk wants the legacy of Gabriels to be that they made great music and struck a chord with people.

"Hopefully we leave the world better than we came into it," he says. "And also treat our musicians right, treat our crew right, respect each other and other people. That's such an important thing. I want that to be part of our legacy too."

"Gabriels are very different to anything else right now, it's unique"
DUNCAN ELLIS ATLAS ARTISTS

Higher power: *Gabriels supporting Elton John at Hyde Park (top), on stage at The Social (middle) and Jacob Lusk performing with Gladys Knight on American Idol in 2011 (bottom)*

PHOTOS: Dave J Hogan, Kevin Winter/American Idol 2011, Getty, Gabriels

Knight Life

There isn't much in music that **Robin Millar** hasn't turned his hand to, from producing **Sade**'s generation-defining album **Diamond Life** to pushing the business forward with the launch of management, publishing and records company **Blue Raincoat Music**. This year, he's being rewarded with a knighthood and, to celebrate, *Music Week* meets him to reflect on his path through the industry and why his mission to forge a fairer playing field will never end...

WORDS: ANNA FIELDING **PHOTOS:** PENNY MILLAR

"It's generally the musicians who get knighted," says Sir Robin Millar, celebrated producer and co-founder of Blue Raincoat Music. He pauses to consider the fact that, in December, 2022, he found out he was to be awarded a knighthood, following in the footsteps of Universal Music Group chairman & CEO Sir Lucian Grainge. "I'm really chuffed," he adds. "But it's not something I've ever consciously worked towards."

Millar's work presents quite the story. In the 1970s, he signed as an artist with Atlantic, even though he "didn't like being in the limelight". In the end, the label shelved plans to release Cat's Eyes, the album he had been working on with The Rolling Stones' Mick Taylor, after Taylor quit the band.

Subsequently, as a producer, Millar discovered Sade, recording the classic singles Your Love Is King and Smooth Operator, as well as their 1984 album Diamond Life (172,756 post-1994 sales, according to the Official Charts Company). It was a breakthrough for Millar, kicking off a run of hit albums including Everything But The Girl's 1984 debut Eden, Fine Young Cannibals' self-titled 1985 debut and Big Country's 1986 LP The Seer.

Millar joined the nascent Music Producers Guild in the mid-1980s, taking the first step into what would become a career-long bond with industry bodies including PPL and the Association of Professional Recording Services (APRS). He continued producing and running studios for decades, while moving into the business side with various publishing ventures.

His big break as an exec came in 2014, when he founded Blue Raincoat Music with Jeremy Lascelles as a management and publishing operation. Their remit expanded to include records, and in 2019 Reservoir acquired the business. Today, Phoebe Bridgers, Emeli Sandé, Laura Marling and Arlo Parks are among their clients. Millar served as creative director before stepping back due to illness in 2021, when Alison Wenham arrived as COO.

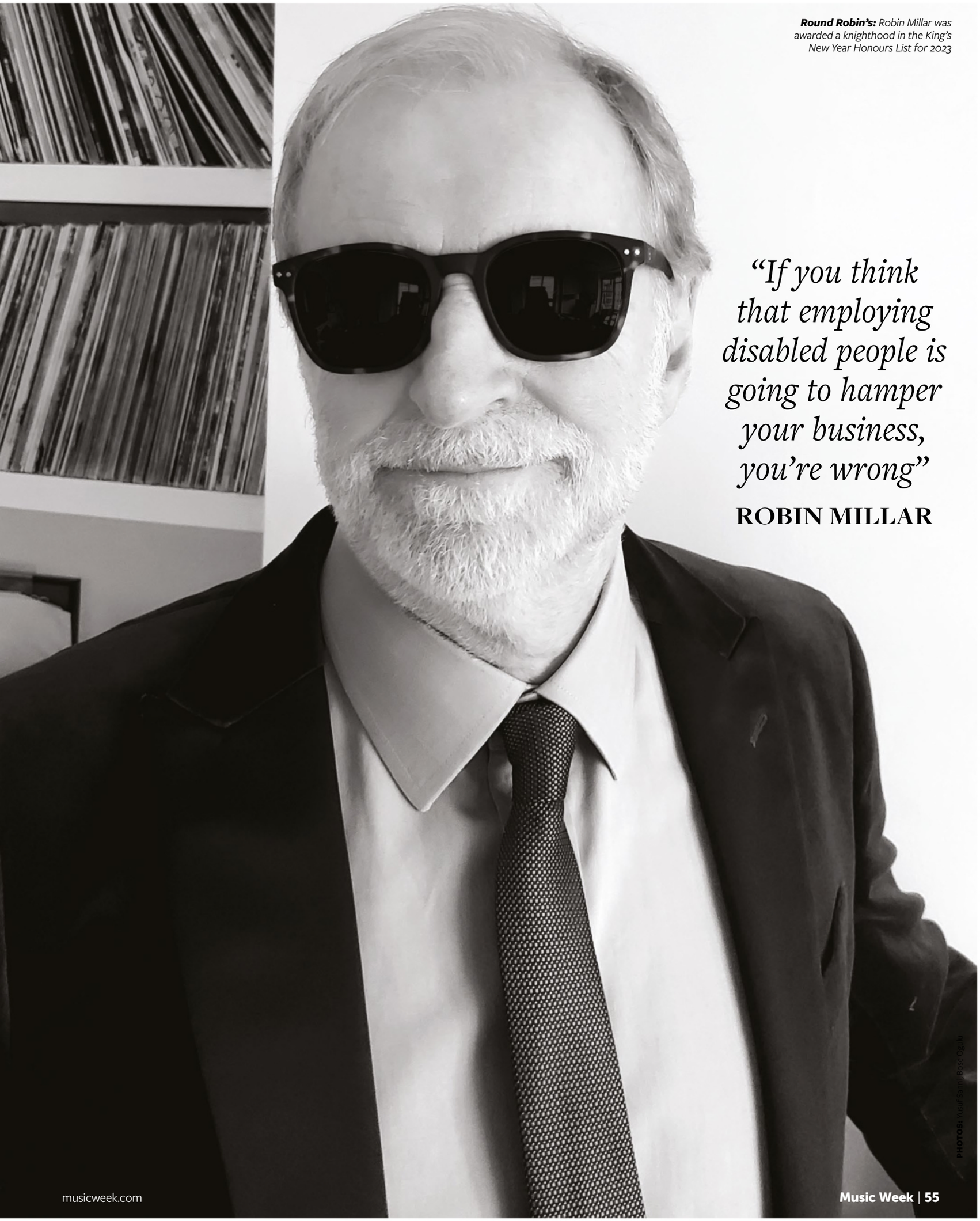
Millar is devoted to his work in the charity sector and has been involved with a range of organisations and initiatives including Leonard Cheshire Disability, CALM UK and Scope, where he is chair designate.

Stressing that anyone who knows him will attest that he is about as far from the limelight-hogging, self-aggrandising big shot music exec as it's possible to be, he reflects thoughtfully on his knighthood.

"My parents, had they been alive, but certainly my sisters, my children, will be thrilled, relieved and honoured, because they've watched me go through life as a disabled person, pushing and pushing, working and working," says Millar, who was born with retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic condition that causes a progressive loss of eyesight. He was registered blind aged 16 and lost his sight fully in 1985.

He admits that the honour "appeals to my ego, ambition and vanity" and says that his peers in the charity sector have been in touch to note the milestone.

"A couple of big charity leaders have said I'm already quite conspicuous as a disabled person who has achieved international recognition, but also as someone who can actually read a balance sheet from one end to the other," he says. "If you get knighted, you're in a very small pool of people with disabilities who look like they're capable as well and it's an opportunity."



Round Robin's: *Robin Millar was awarded a knighthood in the King's New Year Honours List for 2023*

"If you think that employing disabled people is going to hamper your business, you're wrong"

ROBIN MILLAR

PHOTOS: Yusuf Sarmi Bozo Ogulu

He rapidly points out that the pool is small because of a lack of opportunity, rather than a lack of talent, skill or ambition.

"When you look at people who are making a difference, and they are people of colour, women or people with disabilities, very often it will say 'founder' at the bottom of their email signature," he states. "And that's not a coincidence. When you're not given a chance you have to do it for yourself."

Acting independently has long been Millar's MO.

"I've been offered one job during my entire career in the music industry," he says.

That job, accepted at the age of 21 after studying law at Queen's College, Cambridge, was in the royalties department at Polydor.

"And when I left, I made up a complete fib," he remembers. "I said I'd been left money by an aunt and I was going to stop working and make music. The real reason was that I was ashamed, ashamed of being disabled. The job involved a lot of reading and I didn't want to let people know about my bad eyesight. I started making mistakes, it was a humiliating downward spiral..."

Millar knows he has been treated differently because of his disability, whether being knocked back for funding when buying his first studio space or finding the door shut at established companies.

"I've often wondered why other producers who haven't been as successful as me, haven't started successful recording businesses and haven't been involved with trade associations, have jobs as head of A&R on half a million pounds a year," he admits. "I'm not in the club. I do think about an Accenture report, which suggested part of the problem is how many executives overestimate how inclusive their companies are. That will include decision makers at record companies."

He describes himself at various points during our interview – which he conducts from an office gilded with plaques and gold discs – as "a bit of a lefty" and certainly comes across as a man with a progressive stance who believes strongly in fairness.

Last summer, he wrote an open letter published by *Music Week* calling on Glastonbury Festival to take action over Noel Gallagher's use of the disabled viewing platform during Jamie T's set and subsequent comments about disabled festival-goers.

After our chat today, he will head to Manchester to discuss education with the city's mayor Andy Burnham. The following day, he follows up to weigh in on the debate about the representation of women among the 2023 BRIT nominations.

"At Blue Raincoat, we make choices," he says. "Our roster of artists is not huge, but it is meaningful and [includes] 15 women, six men, gay icons galore, seven people of colour."

Such passion has been constant throughout the fascinating career of Robin Millar. And so we settle in to talk Chrysalis, business, diversity, and why he turned down Aretha Franklin...

Let's start with Blue Raincoat Music. What was the primary driver behind starting the business?

"In 2013, Jeremy Lascelles [CEO] contacted me and said he'd had a good idea. He wanted to start a company, but it had occurred to him that all managers were overworked and under-resourced. He wanted to find a catalogue, either in publishing or recorded music, and find about 12 staff to work with it. But those dozen people should also have some spare time and use it to support music managers. So when the Chrysalis catalogue came up, we grabbed it with both hands. When you see something that's neglected and you spend some time on it, then it will be worth more money. Our initial ambitions were simply to have the artists' catalogue and to support managers. In the old days, a record company would have a press department, marketing, radio pluggers... Now, those things are often outsourced and managers are left trying to do everything, often with little experience and as just one person. The first two managers that Jeremy pursued were Ed Harris, who was managing a fledgling Cigarettes After Sex, and Darin Harmon, who was managing the fledgling Phoebe Bridgers. Both acts were playing to about 500 people a night, now it's more like 8-9,000."

A life in music: *Sade Adu at the BRIT Awards in 1986 (top), Robin Millar's Blue Raincoat Music colleagues (L-R) Alison Wenham, James Meadows and Jeremy Lascelles (middle) and Millar and his guitar (bottom)*

And then in February 2020, you relaunched Chrysalis as a frontline label. What prompted that?

"Reservoir came in as a partner. They were interested in master rights, but they also thought we'd done an amazing job with the company. We had increased the turnover by 10 times in three years, which makes us sound amazing, but remember it had been very neglected, half our biggest tracks weren't even on streaming services. They then became a partner, via a 50/50 joint venture, to release frontline music. We kept the shares, but they provided recoupable funding. I mean, it can cost you £150,000 to promote one single and Jeremy and I are not those kind of risk takers. So we've now put out a small number of records, the first of which was the last Laura Marling record [Song For Our Daughter, in partnership with Partisan] which was very good. We then signed Emeli Sandé because we both feel very strongly that her best years are to come. We want to take a long view with artists."

So will you be building the roster further?

"We now represent the publishing for Nick Drake and that is our big project for this year, so we're not looking into more frontline signings for now. It's the first time he has changed publisher since his death and, honestly, it's an honour. We are recording versions of his songs completely reimagined by a range of artists, all of whom you'll have heard of. They have to remain nameless, I'm afraid, but your eyes would be out on stalks. The only thing we told them was not to make it like the original."

With Alison Wenham on board as COO, how is the future looking for your role at the company?

"Alison has been great. In October 2021, I was diagnosed with cancer, so Jeremy and I sat down to work out what to do. He's always been the A&R person and I would never tread on his toes. As well as playing a supporting role on the music side, my role was in finance and admin, I know how to do deals. I knew that whatever happened I would be spending a lot of time in hospital waiting rooms, so I could carry on being a second opinion on tracks and artists, or even go and meet an artist who needs support, but not the rest. Jeremy suggested Alison and I thought it was a genius idea. We spoke to Alison about making her permanent at the end of her 12-month contract, she thought I'd want to come back and I don't! She does it much better than me – and I never have to look at a data protection agreement again! After an intense year, it seems like I'm out of the woods, somewhere between being in remission and having the all clear."

PHOTOS: Dave Hogan/Hulton Archive/Getty Images, Blue Raincoat Music, Robin Millar

"We need artists to take a deep breath and say that they won't put out any more physical product because they are protecting the environment"

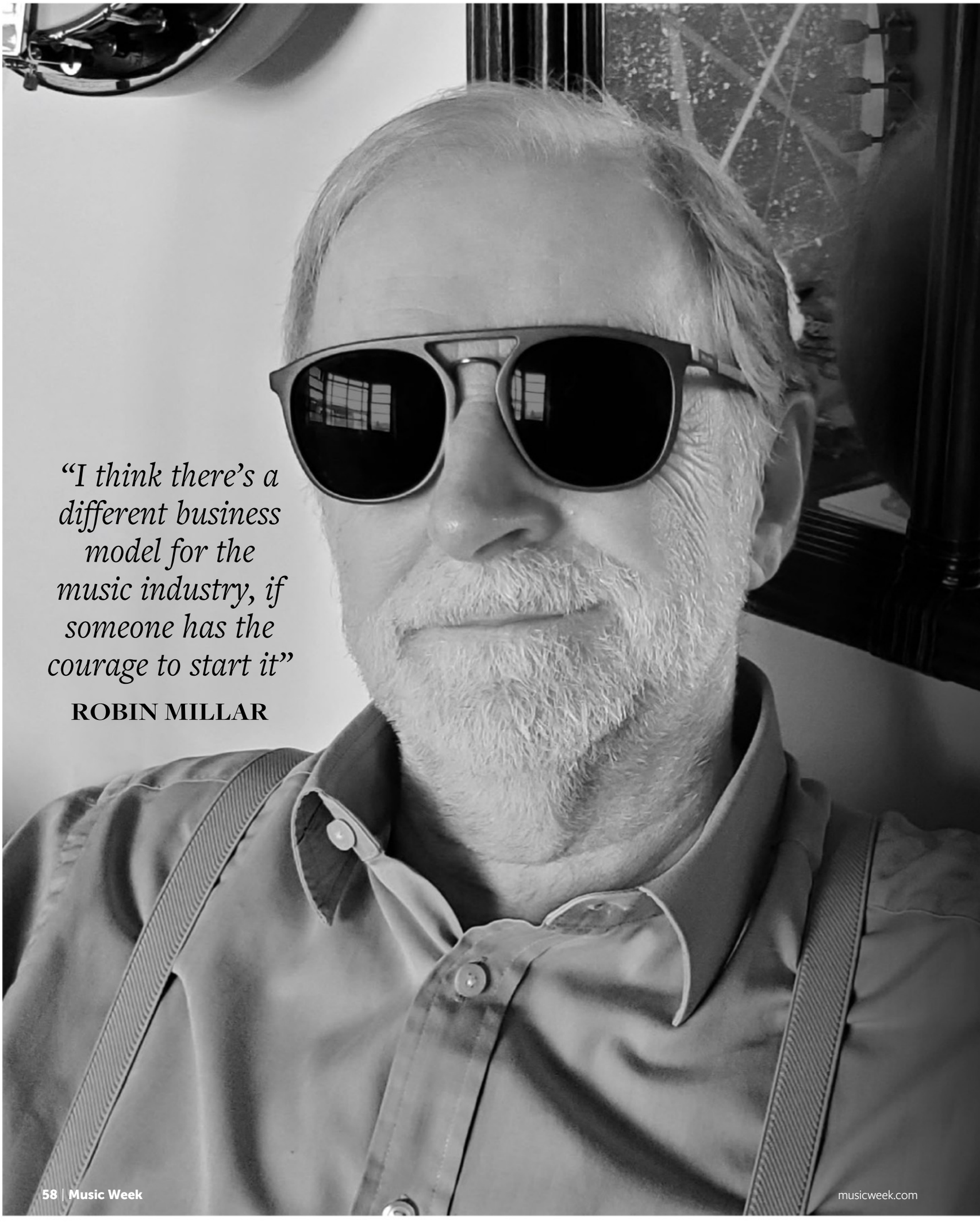
ROBIN MILLAR

Has the break given you a pause to reflect on your career? Is there anything you would have done differently?
"Half of me would say I wouldn't have bothered getting a law degree and then looking for a graduate job. I applied for 36 different jobs and Polydor was the only one I got. But you know, a year later, I went and tried to get a job in a recording studio and I couldn't get one in Britain, so I went to France. I did my apprenticeship at a studio called Le Château. And the timing was serendipitous, because the years I spent there were the years that Fleetwood Mac and David Bowie and the Saturday Night Fever soundtrack happened in that studio. So if I hadn't done the degree and I'd gone there earlier, I would have missed all that. Also, Le Château had realised there was a good trick in using dead time, with new, young bands coming in at night and it being cheaper. I was young and capable of staying up all night, so they became my shifts. As there was no one else in the studio, I rather cheekily put my name on the cassettes as the producer."

What brought you back to the UK after that?
"I came back because I was getting married and my wife was working in London, so I started trying to get the money together to buy my own studio. I'd found an accountant and he'd put me forward for these investment meetings and the people I'd met with would be ringing him up and saying, 'You didn't tell us he couldn't see, we can't put money into that.' But, eventually, I bought a very dilapidated studio called Morgan where lots of Rod Stewart's early stuff had been recorded, as well as Lou Reed's Berlin, which was my favourite album at that time. I guess I thought there was something in the walls. I changed the name to Power Plant and copied what I'd learned at Le Château about using the dead time to make demos. The second band I got in was Sade."

How did that happen?
"I'd been doing a lot of charity records. The Specials' Free Nelson Mandela was recorded in my studio and I recorded and mixed the first ever Artists Against Apartheid concert. I met Sade because I was recording a song to raise money for Chilean solidarity, which was also when I first met Jeremy Lascelles. I'd persuaded Robert Wyatt and Tracey Thorn to sing on it and two of Sade turned up to play, then the next day their manager called me."

Can you put into words how it felt the first time you heard Sade?
"At the time, they were basically a funk band with Sade Adu singing over the top. But that voice... I remember calling my dad at midnight and saying, 'There's this band I'm going to work with and I reckon if I get the job right I've nailed it.' In a week, we recorded Smooth Operator and Your Love Is King, but no record companies were interested, they said it was too smooth, too jazzy. But Sade was going out with [the journalist]



"I think there's a different business model for the music industry, if someone has the courage to start it"

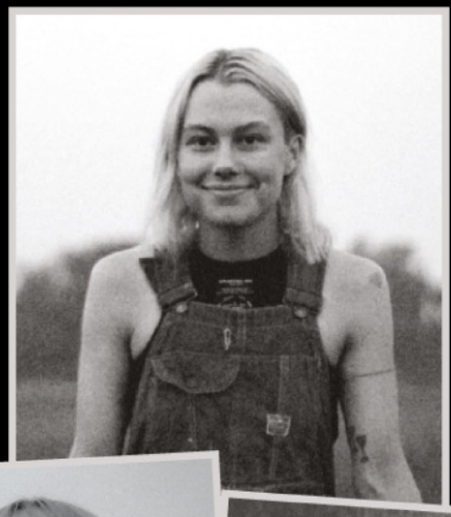
ROBIN MILLAR

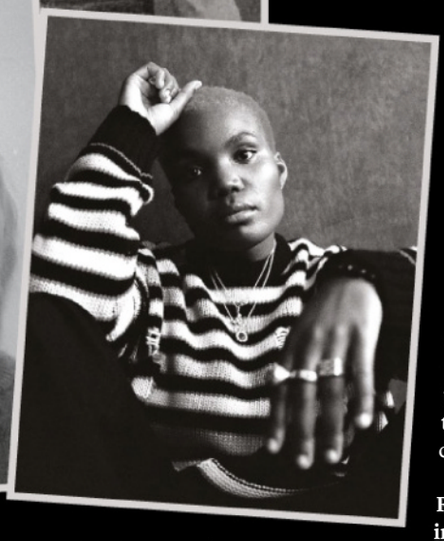
Robert Elms, and I have to give him full credit. He was writing for The Face and they put her on the cover. We put on this gig at Heaven in Charing Cross, told all the papers and gave them a sneak preview of The Face. There were 600 people turned away from that gig, with all the photographers snapping away outside. All the record companies who had previously said no were on the phone the next day. CBS, now Sony, were the highest bidder and they said, 'We're going to send you to America to work with Quincy Jones and Sade said, 'I'm quite happy with Robin Millar.'"

Looking back now, how did the breakthrough with Sade change your career?
"There are a lot of producers who've had breakthrough hits that you've never heard of. I think I did a very sensible thing. In the two years after Diamond Life I was offered Aretha Franklin, Rickie Lee Jones, Chris Rea, Chaka Khan and Anita Baker. And I said no because I wasn't good enough. I didn't think I could do that smooth, LA, session player thing, but I had worked painstakingly with a young British band and done the bassline over and over until it sounded right. You would have producers who had a British hit who would then be offered these global bands and make a hash of it because they didn't have the experience. Nile Rodgers once told me that he'd worked with Aretha Franklin and at one point said, 'That was great, but perhaps we could go over the end again?' And Aretha said, 'No, I think that was fine, young man.' I mean, who is going to argue with Aretha?!"

As someone who has been on both sides of those kinds of debates and subsequently worked as an executive, has the business side of what you do ever been at loggerheads with your creative instincts?
"It is quite an unusual combination, but it just springs from having to do everything myself. And it does probably stem from the law degree giving me a lot of confidence, I think, to go into businesses and not be afraid of contracts. All these things that I've done are not because I've spent time as a paid executive [in the traditional sense]. The main thing I would say about my personal journey is that I'm obsessed with the whole business of making records."

Of course, that business has changed hugely since you came into it. Do you think artists are getting a fair deal when it comes to remuneration in the modern industry?
"I think there's a completely different business model if someone has the courage to start it. I would start with a streaming service with the right influential people on board and a promise to split everything 30/30/30 between labels, songwriters and artists, minus the very clear costs of running the service. I don't see how you can be as big as Spotify or Apple Music without having taken too big a bite. A very old friend of mine, a management consultant, told me years ago that the thing about selling stuff is that if you lose control of your distribution, you're on a hiding to nothing. And I think that's what the music industry did with the rise of streaming services, it lost control of its distribution."





Group Therapy: *(Clockwise from top) Blue Raincoat Music clients Phoebe Bridgers, Arlo Parks and Laura Marling*

Talking of distribution, there's currently a lot of debate about vinyl versus CDs. Where do you stand?
"I'm a real outlier on this one. I'm looking for something new. I'm desperate for something new, actually. We all want to pin our flag to climate change and do what we can, but how can we say that when we work with a product that's made in toxic environments in India, which we then put on a ship and send halfway around the world? I think we need artists who will take a deep breath and say that they won't put out any more physical product because they are protecting the environment. And if they don't do that then they have to keep their mouth shut about the environment. Jeremy and I banned plastic jewel boxes from CDs, but we can't get away from the fact that they are made from plastic. I am conflicted, because we do meet 18-year-olds who want to make an album, not a collection of tracks, and very often they walk in with a physical album under their arm. Album design is as much a part of the experience as the music and there isn't a way for a virtual product to give that kind of satisfaction. So it's a complex question."

Finally, what is your message to the industry regarding improving diversity and inclusion? What do you want to see happen next?
"In terms of disability, I don't see how we'll ever have a moment like #MeToo or Black Lives Matter. And thank goodness, in a way, but we have to chip away at it. I can't imagine something happening that is going to make the world wake up and cause a real kick-start and a sea change. So it's not easy, keeping diversity going. But the one thing I keep saying is, 'If you think that employing disabled people is going to hamper your business, you're wrong and the stats will back that up.' If you're inclusive, your business will [improve]. Your business will make more money and, because fewer people leave, your recruitment costs will go down. If you think that, [as of July 2022] 22% of people in the UK are disabled and they'll have an average support [network] of a mum and dad, a neighbour, a partner, then that's half the country. You can't really turn your back and say, 'Well, we won't worry about the world's biggest minority.' For the music industry, building the workforce you want to do the job with one eye firmly on diversity requires effort, planning and a lot of thought around recruitment. Get some advice from Small Green Shoots, PurpleSpace or Attitude Is Everything, you know, people who know about this stuff. Honestly, though, I do feel a bit like it's down to me now, as the only conspicuously disabled, internationally successful musician and executive. After Andrea Bocelli and Stevie Wonder, if I'm the most successful blind music maker in the world, that is quite something to think about, isn't it?"

CROW
SOURC

Debbie Gayle and **Nick Mathius** founded their tour management business right before Covid struck, yet **LiveSource** has fought back since 2020, working with the likes of **Young T & Bugsey**, **Enny**, **Rema** and more. Now, they're set on expanding. *Music Week* meets the pair to discuss the indispensable role of live music in today's industry, the need to open new pathways to success and the future of touring...

WORDS: COLLEEN HARRIS **PHOTOS:** LOUISE HAYWOOD-SCHIEFER

For a tour management start-up, the bumpy road of entrepreneurship could scarcely face a challenge bigger than a pandemic within two months of launching. But Debbie Gayle and Nick Mathius, who founded LiveSource in January 2020, battened down and weathered the storm.

"Debbie and I just always knew that we could get through it," says Mathius, adding that quitting, despite the threat to business, was never on the cards.

"It was never a thought of, 'Oh my God, we're not going to be able to do this anymore,'" chimes in Gayle, who believes the early test to the company's resilience was key. "We're so used to problem solving and being solution-oriented, that it was just second nature. I think that is a key part of entrepreneurialism – if there's a problem, let's solve it."

It's this mix of steel and experience that keeps Gayle and Mathius on track. At the start of 2023, their client list includes Enny, J Hus, M1llionz, Miraa May, Niko B, Rema, Shaybo, Tiffany Calver, Unknown T, Young T & Bugsey and Live Nation, and they have big plans for the future.

The pair are firmly focused on establishing LiveSource as a 360 degree tour and production service – taking full leadership on logistics, booking, travel, accounting, stage production and creative direction.

"It's down to our work ethic, we're hungry to do it and we can do it," says Mathius. "It's a lot of work, but we'd rather be in control of everything so we know it gets done to the level that we deem it needs to be done. It's just easier that way."

Beyond that, the pair hope that their work can help change the face of the live business. Both were included in the Black Music Coalition's Excellence Honourees list in 2022 and are passionate about the fight for a more equal industry.

"I think within live music, it's about diversity being reflected within the infrastructure, and not just here and there but all the way through – from the person at the front of the stage all the way through to the person in the back office," says Gayle. "I feel like we should be represented across the board."

Gayle and Mathius are compelling company, the way that they trade points during our conversation portrays a close relationship built over years working together. Prior to starting LiveSource, between them, they helped to bring some of the industry's biggest artists to the UK for their early concerts.

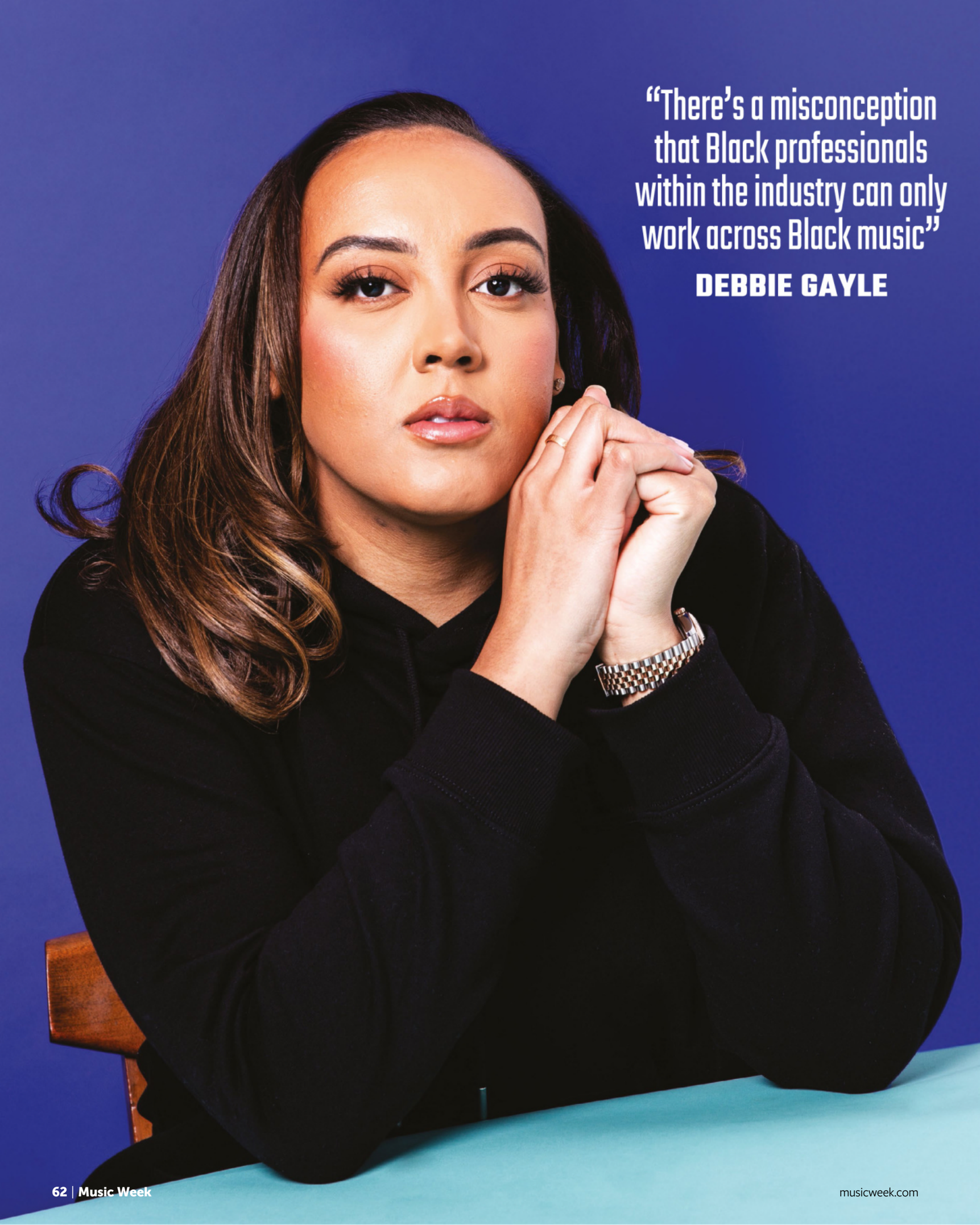
From the age of 18, Gayle worked in club promotion in London's West End and developed an ear for new music.

"We brought Nicki Minaj here first, Tyga, Big Sean – way before everything started happening for them," she says. "Off the back of that, we ended up doing a concert for Miguel."

It was this opportunity that solidified her desire to pursue tour management as a serious career. And while Gayle made moves in clubs and concerts, Mathius was doing the same,

VD
NG

Magic Source:
Nick Mathius & Debbie Gayle, photographed for Music Week in London, January 2023


“There’s a misconception that Black professionals within the industry can only work across Black music”
DEBBIE GAYLE

75 miles away in Portsmouth, while studying at university.

"I worked on some of the first Black music events in the city at that time," he says. "My last one was with Lethal B and Stormzy, five months before he won his first MOBO, before anyone knew who he was."

Gayle and Mathius subsequently ended up working together on different projects and the pair soon discovered a shared ambition, prompting them to go it alone.

It is working so far, with LiveSource at the centre of some of the biggest breakthrough stories the UK has produced in recent years, from J Hus to Young T & Bugsey. This year looks set to become a whole lot busier for the business, so we dive into a wide-reaching conversation with Gayle and Mathius to discuss expansion, the future of Black music and why live shows will always be integral to breaking acts...

Calm and collected: *Rema on stage with Dave (top) and saluting the crowd at O2 Academy Brixton last year*

First up, what sets LiveSource apart in terms of what you can offer artists?

Nick Mathius: "We can't speak about what anyone else does, but we offer to look after the whole breadth of the artist's live performance career. If they're starting out doing clubs or small venues, we can help and assist with that, all the way up to arena and stadium events as well as tours. Outside of the tour management side of things, what separates us is that we are very hands on when it comes to creative direction. We come from an events background, so we still do events for brands and artist launch parties. We cover the whole sphere of live entertainment."

Debbie Gayle: "Before forming LiveSource Nick and I had extensive experience, whether as artists liaison, managing stages at festivals or working for promoters and managing their events. So I think we have a very strong understanding of events as a whole. We have a holistic view of everybody's experience and can relate to all of that, which really benefits what we do. We're very invested and we genuinely care about the artist's career. We've worked with most of our clients from a grassroots level. Nick's been working with J Hus from when he was doing 100-capacity club venues up until now. Being a part of that growth with an artist is something that I hold very dear to my heart, and I think that's what I enjoy the most, being on that journey with them. Being there the first time a crowd sings back their lyrics, real moments like that. So rather than focusing on show to show, we like to oversee a live career for an artist."

Covid arrived shortly after you started the business. How is recovery going?

DG: "It's interesting, because just before Covid we did our Rising Star piece in *Music Week*, so this is almost like a full circle moment. It's like this is our first year, we're now able to launch again after Covid. It feels like we're doing alright, it's exciting."

You're also facing the disruption caused by Brexit to touring visas. How significant is that problem proving so far?

NM: "That is a nightmare. Before, we could just book and go, now we've got to take a list of every single thing we're travelling with and make sure it's correct. It's a lot harder when we're travelling with bands, that's where the real issues and technicalities can have an effect on people's livelihoods. Musicians could travel and tour a country or a region for a month, now we've got to pay for these visas. That's having a real impact. There are a lot of talented musicians in the UK, younger ones as well, and it's diminishing what they can look forward to experiencing. For artists, it's blocking the amount of growth they can have. American artists can tour the whole of the United States, which is bigger than Europe, and they're fine. So [for] UK artists now, is it just the UK? That's tiny."

DG: "It changes things for new artists that may not have label backing or big budgets behind them because, ultimately, it will cost them more to tour and it may not make sense."

How is your working relationship evolving while having to juggle these issues?

DG: "We have a similar way of thinking, and a similar way of handling situations. We don't get overwhelmed by a lot of things and we both remain quite calm in what others may perceive as stressful situations. Aside from that, we have very different personalities, which helps keep a balance. The things that I may struggle with or lack, Nick is very strong in. And I'd like to say vice versa as well."

So where does the relationship excel most? And where do you struggle or disagree?

DG: "A lot of our disagreements are over saying the exact same thing in two different ways. I can be quite stubborn. I'm like, 'Okay, I understand what you're saying, but can you say it my way please?' I think that's where we struggle, but most of the time when we reason with each other and then try to play devil's advocate on things, we always come to an even understanding."

How do you measure success?

NM: "Still being here and active right now is a very big deal. With the way Covid impacted our whole industry and the fact that we were so new and so young in it, we didn't have the connections where other people could go to someone and say, 'Hey, I worked with you 10 years ago.' We don't have any of that. We're still here, this year is looking

PHOTOS: SCRDOFME

very, very good and artists are still trusting us despite not working with us for long. That's one of our biggest successes right now."

DG: "For me, success is doing what you set out to do, when after every show an artist, a client or their manager is ecstatic and pleased, because it's their craft. When an artist comes off stage and feels that way, you can't recreate it. Seeing that every time there's a show is a small success."

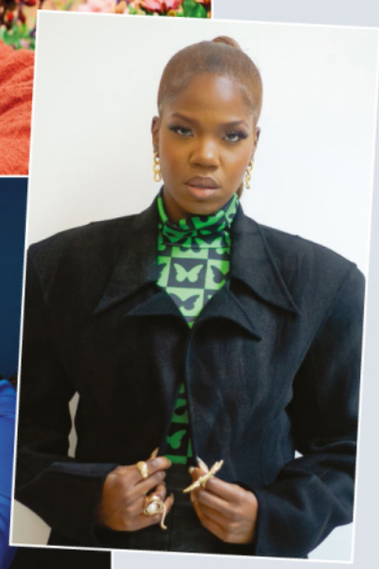
Is there a tour that you're most proud of?
NM: "I'm proud of all of them. I know it sounds like a cliché, but everyone we've worked with is coming from a different place. They've all got their own different challenges. We've worked on big tours; we've done J Hus, his last one [in 2017] that ended in London, that was amazing. We had to go through a lot of hurdles for that. There are also other [smaller] tours, but for getting them off the ground and making them work as well as keeping everyone safe, happy and healthy, they are still successful in my eyes as well."

DG: "We've done support tours with developing artists and those are still ones that I'm super proud of. I've done tours where it's just me and the artist on the road across Europe. Those still give me that same rewarding feeling as doing a global star's headline show."

Speaking of which, you worked on Rema's UK dates last year. What was it like to be part of his story?
NM: "We work closely with his label and management with M1llionz, so already having that relationship, it just made sense to have us across it with Rema. Then we became really hands on with it because there was a lot going on. It needed a lot of eyes, so we looked after the UK side of his run and we did Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and two nights in London. They were very hectic nights, but it was great."

And looking ahead, what's coming up this year?
NM: "We're working on a few things outside of tour management. We are developing our artist liaison offering and our production and creative elements. It makes our ways of working smoother because we can take advantage of the knowledge that we have from another sector. If we're working in artist liaison, we know how artists work and how their teams operate, so we can be five steps ahead knowing the typical obstacles that we could overcome. We're already handling problems before you've even turned up. We know how festivals generally operate, so we know what issues an artist may come across and can get rid of them before the artist has to deal with them. I think that extra understanding and experience that we have helps us across any part of the industry that we're working in."

How has the landscape changed in recent years for Black music in the live space?
NM: "Perceptions are still going to be what they are, but the way it's being handled has changed, more so because of the people within the scene now. You've got the likes of myself and Deb and other people that have been there [a while]. People know that we are reliable, they know that there's going to be a certain level of professionalism. That already makes it feel more comfortable than if they have no connection to anyone working on the event. That's one of the biggest things we've seen, when we return to venues it's like, 'Oh OK, it's you guys.' Their anxieties decrease and they're more comfortable."



Awesome Source: *(Clockwise from top) LiveSource clients Niko B, Enny and Miraa May*

DG: "The success of Black music being reflected in the infrastructure behind it in the live sector will help change things. It can't just be, 'Oh, the venues know Debbie and Nick, so that's fine,' or, 'The venues know this person or that person.' I don't think that's beneficial at all. I think that creates a whole different problem."

You were both part of the BMC's 2022 Excellence Honourees list. Where do you stand on the issue of diversity now? Are the pathways open enough?
NM: "No, let's just be honest. There's not enough support. It's because it's business, so everyone's looking at their bottom line. There are a lot of teams that operate with no Black staff or Black tour managers. We have been speaking to a lot of younger talent in the tour management space, lighting engineers and so forth, but we can't necessarily bring them along to every show. We can't fund them all. That's where some support would help. We have been successful because we've been able to gain experience. You can do courses, but people need to be out there getting experience, and sometimes, unfortunately, that's going to cost money."

DG: "I do think [more] opportunities would help. There's a misconception that Black professionals within the industry can only work across Black music. Nick and I have worked across the board, that includes working on genres that aren't typically seen as Black music. We've worked at world music stages, at electronic dance festivals, Nick's done Christian pop, I've worked on metal, rock and indie shows. But I think because we are Black and because we operate within Black music, it's often seen as though that's our space, and we should stay there. That's a challenge and a barrier that not only we face, but also people coming into the industry. Not every Black lighting engineer likes rap or grime, they might not want to work in that sector. But I do think the live industry is trying and taking notice. People do seem willing but it's about timing, things aren't just going to happen overnight or even in a year."

Finally, how would you sum up the role of live music in the industry today? Does it get the respect that it deserves?
NM: "It's the last tangible part of music. The only thing you can actually feel now is being in a venue or at a festival. Instagram views and followers are great, but it's not a real feeling. If Instagram turned off tomorrow, it's gone. This is the last thing where an artist is in control of their environment, they can control what they put out to their fans, how they make their fans feel, and get feedback instantly. That's still, to me, one of the most amazing things – when you're on the stage and the crowd reacts to a song for the first time. You can always see when it hits an artist, they're like, 'Oh, they sang that back.' But I feel like it's still respected because it's business. Shows make a lot of money for whoever's putting them on and working on them. It's definitely respected because of the amount of money you can bring in for an artist, a festival, a city or even a country."

PHOTOS: Jahnay Fyffe, Romany Francesca

"Live shows are the last tangible part of music, they're the only thing you can actually feel"

NICK MATHIUS

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CENTRE STAGE

Music Venue Trust CEO Mark Davyd's monthly deep dive into live music's biggest issues...

THIS MONTH:

BACK TO THE ROOTS

A New Year's Resolution for the live music industry: from January 1 2024, no show should take place in any major arena, stadium or festival where the ticket doesn't include a contribution to the grassroots circuit that supported the artist in building their career. We have 12 months to plan, let's make it a reality.

At Music Venue Trust we've bounced straight into 2023 all guns blazing, determined to tackle the underlying challenges that our grassroots circuit has been facing for decades. The first part of that work started late last year when we hosted colleagues from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport at two of London's finest grassroots venues – Corsica Studios and The Lexington. Both have their own stories, but it's their current circumstances, the way they operate and the restrictions on their ability to support new artists that should concern us most.

Corsica Studios is surrounded by building developments that are simply inappropriate to be built around a thriving grassroots music venue. There are huge holes in the ground both in front of and behind the venue, waiting for tonnes and tonnes of concrete to be poured into them to create housing.

The developments are so close that the venue will have to move, a complex negotiation that still hasn't been adequately settled. Corsica has been at the heart of live music in its community for over a decade, but there's never been a time when the venue felt its future was safe or free from landlords and developers.

The Lexington, on the other hand, is thriving despite an ongoing problem with neighbours and some extraordinary demands on the team there to manage the streets on behalf of the local authorities. However, the nature of how it thrives as a business is a prime example of the challenges the grassroots sector is facing.

The venue loses money on live music and relies on the fantastic downstairs bar and club nights to keep the live music offer alive. How bad are the economics of live music at this level? To fill their nights with new music and to support promoters, both of which are essential to the future of our industry, The Lexington charges less than a third of the cost of opening the venue as a hire fee. If they didn't do that, there wouldn't be any live music. The venue is investing hundreds of thousands of pounds a year into live music with no prospect of return on that investment.

"No show should take place in any arena where the ticket doesn't contribute to the grassroots circuit"

MARK DAVYD MUSIC VENUE TRUST

STATE OF THE (INDIE) NATION:

A monthly update on the ongoing closure crisis facing the UK's grassroots music venues, which MVT tackles through its Emergency Response Service of experts...

New Emergency response service cases in 2023: 12
Ongoing cases: 41
Grassroots Music Venue closures in 2023: 1
Grassroots Music Venue openings in 2023: 0

The DCMS meetings were enlightening for everyone involved. We're currently drawing up a report covering 17 areas of government and public policy which could enable more supportive environments for grassroots venues and artists. They include obvious things like tackling the highest rate of VAT on ticketing in Europe, to measures such as a Statutory Duty Of Notification and Right Of Comment on planning applications being granted to Music Venue Trust. The government, or at least our DCMS colleagues, are genuinely engaged with what they can do to overcome the challenges the sector faces.

But the government keeps coming back to the same question, 'What is the industry itself doing to tackle these issues?' The answer is, we aren't doing enough. We can't go on pretending that everything is fine while the foundation stones of how we build talent in the UK are chipped away. Bluntly, we can't go on making incredible profits from successful artists that came through a system which we are also allowing to crumble.

There are eight new arenas proposed to be built in the UK across the next five years. Not a single one of those proposals commits to ensuring that the new venue's success will support the grassroots circuit creating the talent.

There are 22 live music arenas and more than 30 major stadiums or festivals in the UK. Not one of them has a mandated contribution to the grassroots circuit within their ticket price. We have service charges, maintenance and restoration levies, but not the one thing we absolutely must have: an investment into our future.

In the UK, we have enjoyed years of free research and development carried out by venues like Corsica Studios and The Lexington at their sole expense. That period is now ending. I'm putting you all on notice. It's over.

It can end by the UK live music industry working with Music Venue Trust to recognise the value of it, work towards a financial support package for it, and take responsibility. We can do that in a method we collectively control and manage as stakeholders.

Or, it can end by the government, this one or the next one, becoming fed up with reading about live music venues in their constituency being closed down and taking action to make the industry take responsibility.

The time to do it is now, before it is done to us. January 1 2024. There's your deadline. Resolve to get it done.

HITMAKERS

The world's greatest songs. By the people who made them.

ELTON JOHN & DUA LIPA
COLD HEART (PNAU REMIX)

Having worked on his remix album Good Morning To The Night in 2012, **PNAU** renewed acquaintances with **Elton John** for 2021 **Dua Lipa**-starring smash **Cold Heart**. Here, the Australian dance music trio's **Nick Littlemore** and **Peter Mayes** chart their relationship with Sir Elton and relive the creation of a million-selling pop monster...

INTERVIEW: JAMES HANLEY

Nick Littlemore: "We were teenagers when we first met Elton. It came about after he had dinner with Toni Collette in Sydney. Toni is repped by our live agent and had a band called Toni Collette & The Finish. She is a brilliant raconteur and tells stories between songs about jazz greats and filming with Steven Spielberg. Elton and Toni are good friends and he told her he'd picked up this album at Virgin Megastore with a bright cover. He put it on and it blew his mind. It was our self-titled 2007 third album."

Peter Mayes: "We were still living in Australia, which feels like a long time ago now, and we had a No.1 remix album with him with [2012's] Good Morning To The Night."

NL: "Cold Heart started with Elton asking us to take on his catalogue again. And this time, he wanted a hit single. He didn't want us to just make something artful, it was more about making something that was going to ignite the hearts, ears and minds of the global music community."

PM: "It was the beginning of the pandemic, around May 2020. We were in separate studios in Downtown LA and it was complete lockdown. We didn't know anything about Covid and everyone was bleaching their groceries, it was crazy times. No one was hanging out with anyone, but the music world was very much moving towards remote working anyway. You're firing emails back and forth even if someone's in the same city and I think the pandemic just cemented that. Not so much for the creative process, but certainly for finishing off records.

"We had the tapes from Elton's whole career, so there was a lot to choose from. We'd done a lot of the more obscure '70s stuff on the previous album, but we wanted to do something bigger, focus more on vocals and have a radio moment. We hadn't delved into Elton's '80s and '90s catalogue much, but Nick was messing around with Sacrifice and sent it to me.

"I was like, 'Okay, cool. Sacrifice is fair game then,' so the verse is from Sacrifice and then the chorus is from Rocket Man. We didn't want to use the bit where it says '*Rocket man*' though, because then it would have become Rocket Man. We found that the pre-chorus from Kiss The Bride worked as a post-chorus in Cold Heart, and then there was the Where's The Shoorah? section which was for the outro."

NL: "What does '*Shoorah*' mean? I guess we could ask the audience."

PM: "That's got to be some kind of Elton in-joke with Bernie [Taupin] or something, who knows? I had five or six other options for the chorus apart from Rocket Man. I would drive around with a list of songs and listen to the verse, and there'd be a big gap where the chorus was, so I'd just try and sing any other Elton song over it and see if it would work. Elton has done 50 albums or something, so there were a lot of options – a lot of hits, great melodies and lyrics.

"I probably have a list of notes somewhere on my phone of songs I tried, but I don't remember which others were considered. Probably Tiny Dancer, but it would have had to have been close in key. It was long before the Dua Lipa vocal at this stage, it was all Elton and I had to pick things that were very close in key and tempo. In the case of Rocket Man, I slowed it down a bit to make it work."

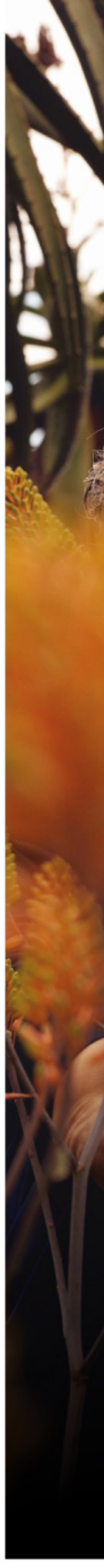
NL: "There were good ideas we could have used but we'd have been moving it too far away from the original recording."

PM: "That's exactly right, once you've picked the key and tempo, you don't actually have that many options. You'd think, 'Can I move this up or down three semitones?' But Elton would sound weird if you did that, because you can't really move a vocal that much. You can with other instruments, but with vocals it just sounds silly and I don't think Elton would have been into a chipmunk version of himself! Dua Lipa came in right at the end. I prepared it for the mix and her people put the vocals on it. We were basically like, 'Great, Dua Lipa's on the record, she can do whatever she wants!'"

NL: "Our hearts were bursting out of our chests when we heard it. It was obvious that it was a classic record. It came on as I was going to work last night and I sang it at the top of my lungs. I'm sure the cab driver didn't appreciate that!"

PM: "Elton's people were asking for more songs like Cold Heart the whole time. It was the first one we delivered to him with another song and I think the plan was to do an album, but he decided to make an album of collaborations because he'd worked with so many people during the pandemic. So it made sense that the track became the lead single."

NL: "It's opened so many doors for us. We ended up inking a deal with Sony Music out of Germany and we're now working with some of the biggest pop stars in the world. I don't know how many we can mention, but if we opened a bag right now, a lot of names would drop out!"



"Elton wanted a hit single, something that would ignite hearts, ears and minds"
Nick Littlemore
PNAU

Going for cold: *PNAU (L-R) Nick Littlemore, Sam Littlemore, Peter Mayes and (below) the animated video for Cold Heart*

Writer's Notes

Publishers: HST Publishing, Cow Dog Music, Chenfeld Ltd, Universal Music Publishing Group, Defected, BMG

Writers: Elton John, Bernie Taupin, Peter Mayes, Nick Littlemore, Sam Littlemore, Dean Meridith, Andrew Meecham

Release Date: 13.08.21

Record Label: EMI/Warner Records

Total UK Sales (OCC): 1,681,081

Publisher's Corner

Leading executives salute their star songwriters...

Darryl Watts, VP creative, Universal Music Publishing Group: "PNAU are a special force. Their longevity is down to them having impeccable taste both in their songwriting and in their productions. I remember when I first got sent Cold Heart, I must have played it 30 times in a row. It's a perfect record – an incredibly clever idea, brilliantly executed – and it was so exciting to see it become a phenomenon around the world."

PHOTO: Cybele Malinowski

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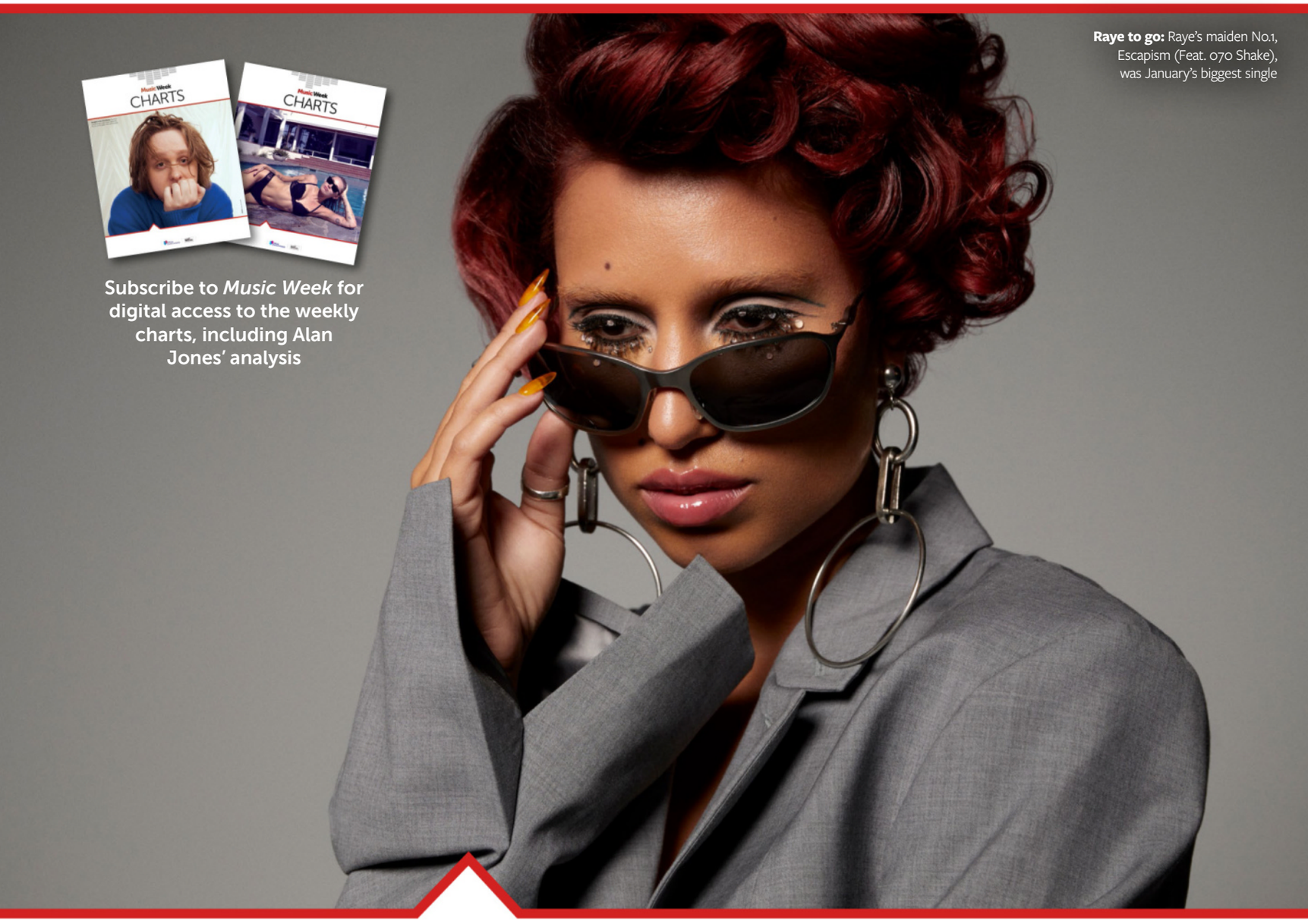
Music Week
MONTHLY CHARTS



Raye to go: Raye's maiden No.1, Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake), was January's biggest single

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72/74 – Singles/Albums
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SINGLES CHART TOP 75

JANUARY CHART WEEKS 01-04

BRIT CERTIFIED PLATINUM, GOLD & SILVER AWARDS

★ Platinum (600,000)
● Gold (400,000)
● Silver (200,000)

TW	LW	WKS	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL CATALOGUE NUMBER (DISTRIBUTOR) (PRODUCER) PUBLISHER (WRITER)
1	17	2	**Raye Ft 070 Shake** Escapism Human Re Sources QMDA62217995 (The Orchard) ● (M.Sabath)Warner Chappell/Sony ATV (R.Keen/M.Sabath/D.Balbuena)
2	New		**Miley Cyrus** Flowers RCA USSM22202811 (Cinram) ● (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson)Warner Chappell/Pulse/Concord (M.Pollack/M.Cyrus/G.Hein)
3	60	2	**Sza** Kill Bill RCA/Top Dawg USRC12204584 (Cinram) ● (C.Lang/R.Bisel)Universal/CC (S.Rowe/C.Lang/R.Bisel)
4	27	4	**Taylor Swift** Anti-Hero EMI USUG12205736 (Cinram) ★ (J.Antonoff/T.Swift)Universal/Sony ATV (T.Swift/J.Antonoff)
5	31	4	**Venbee & Goddard** Messy In Heaven Columbia GBARL2201902 (Cinram) ● (A.Goddard/Tao/J.Manson)CC (E.Doyle/D.Fable/A.Goddard/M.Cinti)
6	70	2	**Lewis Capaldi** Pointless EMI DEUM72203211 (Cinram) (S.Mac)BMG/Sony ATV/Rokstone/Universal (L.Capaldi/E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid)
7	30	5	**Sam Smith & Kim Petras** Unholy Capitol GBUM72205415 (Cinram) ★ (Ilya/Cirkut/Slatkin/Fedi/J.Napes/Smith)WarnerChappell/Universal/CC (Smith/Napier/Ilya/Walter/Slatkin/Fedi/Petras)
8	38	5	**David Guetta & Bebe Rexha** I'm Good (Blue) Parlophone UKWLG2200055 (Arvato) ★ (Guetta/Reznikov)Jackback/BMG/Sony ATV/Gz 2538 (Guetta/Purcell/Rexha/Plested/Randone/Lobina/Gabutti)
9	New		**Central Cee** Let Go Central Cee US39N2203950 (ADA Arvato) (Nastylgia/KwolleM)Warner Chappell/Concord/Sony ATV/CC (O.Caesar-Su/E.Oparah/M.Rosenberg/K.Akindojuromi)
10	45	5	**Rema & Selena Gomez** Calm Down Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin NGA3B2214004 (Virgin/Cinram) ● (Andre Vibez/London)Warner Chappell/Sony ATV (D.Ikubor/A.Uwaifo/M.Hunter)
11	32	3	**Meghan Trainor** Made You Look RCA USSM12204574 (Cinram) ● (F.Vindver)Sony ATV/Warner Chappell (M.Trainor/S.Douglas/F.Vindver)
12	35	4	**Oliver Tree & Robin Schulz** Miss You Atlantic USAT22211992 (Arvato) ● (Oliver Tree Nickell/Marshmello/D.Pramik)Sony ATV/Kobalt (Oliver Tree Nickell/Marshmello/D.Pramik)
13	58	2	**Metro Boomin, The Weeknd & 21 Savage** Creepin' Republic USUG12208791 (Cinram) (Metro Boomin/DaHeala/P. Lee Johnson/J.lenox)CC (LT Wayne/21 Savage/DaHeala/P.Lee Johnson/J.Lenox/M.Winans...)
14	50	10	**Harry Styles** As It Was Columbia USSM12200612 (Cinram) ★2 (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson)Universal/Pulse/One Year Yesterday (H.Styles/T.Hull/T.Johnson)
15	41	5	**Lewis Capaldi** Forget Me EMI DEUM72204717 (Cinram) ★ (Capaldi/TMS)SonyATV/Warner Chapp./BMG (L.Capaldi/M.Pollack/B.Kohn/T.Barnes/P.Kelleher/P.Plested)
16	46	3	**Bugzy Malone & TeeDee** Out Of Nowhere B-Somebody CAN132200297 (ADA Arvato) ● (TeeDee)EMI/Sony ATV/CC (B.Pettit/A.Davies/N.McLean-Daley/T.Dempsey)
17	52	46	**Tom Odell** Another Love Columbia GBARL1201887 (Cinram) ★3 (Odell/Grech-Marguerat)Warner Chappell (Odell)
18	55	8	**OneRepublic** I Ain't Worried Interscope USUM72206227 (Cinram) ★ (Oscroft/Spry/Kutzle/Tedder)EMI/Downtown (B.Yttling/B.Kutzle/J.Eriksson/P.Morén/R.Tedder/T.Spry)
19	New		**Miguel** Sure Thing Jive USJI10800160 (Cinram) ● (Happy Perez)Universal/MCA (N.Perez/M.J. Pimentel)
20	54	6	**Eliza Rose & Interplanetary Criminal** BOTA... Warner/X One House QZAKB2166405 (Arvato) ★ (Interplanetary Criminal)CC (E.R.Creese/Z.Bruce)
21	39	5	**Anne-Marie & Aitch** Psycho Asylum/Major Tom's GBAHS2201059 (Arvato) ● (Billen Ted/Mojam)EMI/Sony ATV/Sony/BMG (Nicholson/Armstrong/Mann/Barker/Tucker/Hollings/Newbitt Brennan)
22	New		**Tiësto & Tate McRae** 10:35 Atlantic/Ministry Of Sound CYA112001130 (Arvato) (LOSTBOY/Tedder/Tiësto)Kobalt/Warner Chappell/Sony ATV (T.Verwest/A.Allen/S.Harris/T.McRae/P.Rycroft/R.Tedder)
23	61	6	**Beyoncé** Cuff It Columbia/Parkwood Ent. USSM12206232 (Cinram) ● (Beyoncé/NovaWav/Rissi/Saadiq/The-Dream)Sony ATV/EMI/Roynet.. (Beyoncé/Andrews/Coney/Ristorp/Saadiq/TheDream...)
24	75	8	**LF System** Afraid To Feel Warner GBAHT2200492 (Arvato) ★ (LF System)Warner Chappell/CC (Finnigan/Larkman/Simmons/Jefferson/Roebuck)
25	48	4	**Stormzy** Hide & Seek 0207/Merky GBUM72204538 (Cinram) ● (P2J/PRGRSHN/O.Cutts)Warner Chappell/BMG/Sony ATV/CC (M.Omari/R.Isong/AJ.Brown/Ayanna/O.Cutts/T.Openiyi...)
26	56	6	**Chris Brown** Under The Influence RCA USRC11902743 (Cinram) ★ (Kiddominant)Universal/Sony ATV/Concord (C.Brown/D.Adeleke/A.Agboola/T.Mckie)
27	Re-Entry		**Ed Sheeran** Bad Habits Asylum GBAHS2100318 (Arvato) ★4 (Sheeran/Fred/McDaid)Sony ATV/Universal/Promised Land (E.Sheeran/J.McDaid/F.Gibson)
28	49	3	**Drake & 21 Savage** Rich Flex Columbia/OVO/Republic USUG12208598 (Cinram) ● (Tay Keith/Vinylz/FNZ/BoogzDaBeast)CC (Various)
29	Re-Entry		**Ed Sheeran** Shivers Asylum GBAHS2100816 (Arvato) ★3 (E.Sheeran/Steve Mac/Fred Again..)Sony ATV/Universal/Rokstone (E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid/K.Lavelle)
30	65	7	**Steve Lacy** Bad Habit L-M/RCA USRC12201440 (Cinram) ● (S.Lacy)Warner Chappell/Kobalt/CC (S.Lacy/M.Castellanos/D.Gordon/B. Fousheé/J.Carroll Kirby)
31	Re-Entry		**Joel Corry & Tom Grennan** Lionheart (Fearless) Atlantic GBAHS2201155 (Arvato) (DigitalFarmAnimals/Corry/Thompson/Applebaum)Sony ATV/Spirit/UMP/Kobalt (Gale/Scott/Needle/Mojam/Grennan/Corry...)
32	New		**Jvke** Golden Hour Jvke GBKPL2204171 (AWAL) (Z.Lawson/Jvke)Kobalt (J.Lawson/Z.Lawson)
33	Re-Entry		**George Ezra** Green Green Grass Columbia GB1102200463 (Cinram) ★ (J.Pott/S.Price)Warner Chappell/BMG (G.Ezra/J.Pott/S.Price)
34	New		**Stephen Sanchez** Until I Found You Republic USUG12103651 (Cinram) ● (I.Fitchuk/K.Snyder)Sony ATV/CC (S.Sanchez/E.Beihold)
35	New		**Cian Ducrot** I'll Be Waiting Polydor GBUM72205880 (Cinram) (C.Ducrot/J.Wander)Sony ATV/Warner Chappell (C.Ducrot/L.Frawley)
36	74	5	**Dermot Kennedy** Kiss Me Island USUG12203745 (Cinram) ● (Steve Mac/KOZ)TaP/UMPG/Rokstone/EMI (S.Mac/D.Kennedy/D.Smith/S.Kozemnuik)
37	Re-Entry		**The Killers** Mr Brightside Vertigo GBFFP0300052 (Cinram) ★7 (Saltzman/The Killers)Universal (Flowers/Keuning)
38	Re-Entry		**Dean Lewis** How Do I Say Goodbye Island AUUM72200187 (Cinram) ● (D.Lewis/J.Hume/E.Holloway/N.Atkinson)Kobalt (D.Loaney/J.Hume)
39	Re-Entry		**Burna Boy** Last Last Atlantic USAT22204901 (Arvato) ★ (Ruuben/MDS/Off&Out/Chopstix)EMI/Sony ATV/Universal/CC (Ogulu/Mason/M&S Haataja/Laukkanen/Kauppinen/Olagundoye...)
40	Re-Entry		**Lewis Capaldi** Someone You Loved EMI DEUM71806776 (Cinram) ★7 (TMS)Sony ATV/BMG (Capaldi/Roman/Kohn/Kelleher/Barnes)
41	Re-Entry		**Glass Animals** Heat Waves Polydor GBUM72000433 (Cinram) ★3 (Dave Bayley/P.Epworth)Beggars (D.Bayley)
42	Re-Entry		**Cat Burns** Go RCA/Since 93 GBKPL2013050 (Cinram) ★ (Jonah)Kobalt/ST Songtrust/Sentric (C.Burns/G.Morgan/W.Tannergaard)
43	Re-Entry		**Kate Bush** Running Up That Hill (A Deal With God) Fish People GBCNR8500002 (ADA Arvato) ★2 (K.Bush)Sony ATV (K.Bush)
44	New		**Lady Gaga** Bloody Mary Interscope USUM71106449 (Cinram) (DJ White Shadow/Lady Gaga)Sony ATV/Warner Chappell/Universal/EMI/Peermusic (Germanotta/Blair/Sparks/Grigahcine...)
45	Re-Entry		**Ed Sheeran** Celestial Asylum GBAHS2201130 (Arvato) ● (S.Mac/E.Sheeran)Rokstone/Universal/Sony (E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid)
46	Re-Entry		**Sza** Shirt RCA/Top Dawg USRV82201712 (Cinram) (R.Jerkins/Freaky Rob)Universal/BMG/CC (S.Rowe /R.Jerkins/R.Gueringer)
47	Re-Entry		**Sam Fender** Seventeen Going Under Polydor GBUM72103036 (Cinram) ★2 (B.Bronte)Kobalt (S.Fender)
48	Re-Entry		**Eminem** Mockingbird Interscope USIR10400813 (Cinram) ★2 (Eminem/Resto)Kobalt (M.Mathers/L.Resto)
49	Re-Entry		**The Weeknd** Save Your Tears Republic/XO USUG12000658 (Cinram) ★3 (Max Martin/O.Holter/The Weeknd)Kobalt/MXM/Warner Chappell/Universal (A.Tesfaye/A.Balshe/J.Quenneville/Max Martin...)
50	Re-Entry		**The Neighbourhood** Sweater Weather Columbia USSM11204647 (Cinram) ★2 (Pilbrow)EMI/Pen Island/Zman/Douche Cash (Rutherford/Abels/Freedman)
51	New		**Skrillex, Fred Again.. & Flowdan** Rumble Atlantic USAT22221613 (Arvato) (Skrillex/Fred again)Kobalt/Sony ATV/Universal/Warner Chappell/CC (S.Moore/F.Gibson/M.Veira/E.Duhé/T.Thompson/J.Douglas)
52	New		**Libianca** People 5K QZTB52268087 (Cinram) (Mage The Producer/JAES)CC (L.Kenzonkinboum Fonji/O. Moses Odia)
53	New		**Sza** Nobody Gets Me RCA/Top Dawg USRC12204598 (Cinram) (C.Lang/B.Blanco)Universal/CC (S.Rowe/R.Bisel/C.Lang/R.Weisse/B.Blanco)
54	Re-Entry		**Central Cee** Doja Central Cee ZZOPM2237319 (ADA Arvato) ● (LiTek/WhyJay)Warner Chappell/Universal (O.Caesar Su/T.Slusarenko /J.Jones)
55	Re-Entry		**David Guetta, Becky Hill & Ella Henderson** Crazy What... Parlophone UKWLG2200001 (Arvato) ★ (Guetta/Riley/Harvey/Thompson/Applebaum)Reservoir/SonyATV/BMG/MindsOnFire (Guetta/Henderson/Riley/Harvey...)
56	New		**Clavish Ft D-Block Europe** Rocket Science Polydor GBUM72207184 (Cinram) (Kazza/Madz Thomas)Sony ATV/CC (C.Wright/R.Banton/A.Williams)
57	Re-Entry		**The Weeknd** Blinding Lights Republic/XO USUG11904206 (Cinram) ★6 (M.Martin/Holter/The Weeknd)Universal/Kobalt/MXM/KMR/Warner Chappell (Tesfaye/Balshe/Quenneville/M.Martin/Holter)
58	Re-Entry		**Rihanna** Lift Me Up Def Jam QMJMT2204480 (Cinram) ● (Göransson)CC (Fenty/Openiyi/Göranssson/Coogler/Renea)
59	Re-Entry		**Luude & Mattafix** Big City Life Warner GBAHT2200803 (Arvato) ● (Luude)BMG (M.Roudette/P.Hirji)
60	Re-Entry		**Taylor Swift** Lavender Haze EMI USUG12205734 (Cinram) ● (J.Antonoff/T.Swift/Sounwave/J.Sweet/Braxton Cook)Universal/Sony ATV/Beat Bully/Kobalt (Swift/Antonoff/Kravitz/Spears/Sweet...)
61	New		**Tory Lanez** The Color Violet One Umbrella QZTGW2100275 (Label Engine) (Roark Bailey/N.Dean/Foreign Teck)Warner Chappell/Universal/Kings Republic (N.Dean/M.Hernandez/Tory lanez)
62	Re-Entry		**Elton John & Dua Lipa** Cold Heart EMI/Warner GBUM72105353 (Cinram) ★2 (PNAU)Universal/BMG (John/Taupin/Mayes/N&S.Littlemore/Meecham/Meredith)
63	Re-Entry		**Coldplay** Viva La Vida Parlophone GBAYE0800265 (Arvato) ★4 (Dravs/Eno/Hopkins/Simpson)Universal (Berryman/Buckland/Champion/Martin)
64	Re-Entry		**Cian Ducrot** All For You Polydor GBUM72201663 (Cinram) ● (C.Ducrot)Sony ATV (C.Ducrot)
65	Re-Entry		**Becky Hill & David Guetta** Remember Polydor GBUM72103544 (Cinram) ★2 (D.Guetta/L.Storrs/S.Lowe)Sony ATV/Universal/Kobalt/Spirit B-Unique/Jackback/Extreme (R.Hill/K.A.Poole/K.Sones/L.Thompson...)
66	Re-Entry		**Adele** Easy On Me Columbia USSM12105970 (Cinram) ★2 (G.Kurstin)EMI/Melted Stone/Kurstin (A.Adkins/G.Kurstin)
67	Re-Entry		**Vance Joy** Riptide Atlantic AULI01385760 (Arvato) ★5 (Keogh/White/Castle)We Are Unified PTY (Keogh)
68	New		**Lil Uzi Vert** Just Wanna Rock Atlantic USAT22219206 (Arvato) (MCVertt/Synthetic)Warner Chappell/CC (S.Woods/J.Mercado/M.Camara)
69	New		**Metro Boomin, Future & Chris Brown** Superhero (Heroes &...) Republic USUG12208783 (Cinram) (Metro Boomin/A.Ritter/David x Eli)CC (LT Wayne/Wilburn/Brown/Ritter/Boyd/West/Diggs/Carter/Thornton/Kasseem/CyHi...)
70	New		**Hotel Ugly** Shut Up My Moms Calling Hotel Ugly TCAEQ2083509 (TuneCore) (Hotel Ugly)Sentric (M.Fiscella)
71	New		**Coi Leray** Players Uptown/Republic USUM72222388 (Cinram) (J.Goldstein)Universal/CC (C.Collins/F.Ferraro/J.Goldstein/Akil King)
72	Re-Entry		**Lizzo** 2 Be Loved (Am I Ready) Atlantic USAT22203706 (Arvato) ● (Max Martin/Ilya)Warner Chappell/Kobalt/MXM (M.Jefferson/ILYA/M.Martin/S.Kotecha/P.Svensson)
73	Re-Entry		**Arctic Monkeys** Do I Wanna Know? Domino GBCEL1300332 (Integral Cinram) ★4 (Ford/Orton)Sony ATV (Turner/Arctic Monkeys)
74	Re-Entry		**Tears For Fears** Everybody Wants To Rule The World Mercury GBF088590110 (Cinram) ★2 (Chris Hughes)BMG (I.Stanley/R.Orzabal/C.Hughes)
75	Re-Entry		**Ed Sheeran** Perfect Asylum GBAHS1700024 (Arvato) ★8 (Hicks/Sheeran/B.Blanco)Sony ATV/Ed Sheeran Ltd (Sheeran)

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ANALYSIS

***Music Week* digs into the month's top chart stories...**

Independent spirit: *Raye*

THE GREAT ESCAPE

RAYE (FEAT. 070 SHAKE)

Escapism (Human Re Sources)

SALES: 217,868

01

As well as achieving her first ever No.1 in the weekly singles chart with Escapism (feat. 070 Shake), Raye tops the January chart, holding off a formidable challenge from Miley Cyrus in the process. Escapism reached the summit in the month's first frame, 12 weeks after it was released, six weeks after it debuted at No.31 and four weeks after its previous peak of No.2. The newly independent star's 19th hit laid the groundwork impressively for debut album My 21st Century Blues (out now), which should spawn more hits in due course. Escapism sold 217,868 copies last month and now has 449,459 sales to date. Escapism racked up almost 10 million streams across audio and video in January alone.

PETAL MACHINE

MILEY CYRUS

Flowers (RCA)

SALES: 212,883

02

It may have only been on sale for the final two weeks of January, but Miley Cyrus' comeback Flowers roared its way to second place for the month thanks to 212,883 sales. It debuted at the summit with 91,731 sales, the highest for a No.1 since Harry Styles' As It Was, which hit the top with 94,140 week one sales. Cyrus' 24th hit (including one as Hannah Montana) sold 121,151 in its second frame and was racing towards a third week at the top as *Music Week* went to press. The star's eighth LP Endless Summer Vacation is due in March.

Flower power: *Miley Cyrus*

POINT PROVED

LEWIS CAPALDI

Pointless (EMI)

SALES: 113,921

06

Lewis Capaldi got physical in January, releasing Pointless on CD versions with three different sleeves, two of which were signed. Each sold out, and their combined sales of 22,396 made a significant contribution to the track's overall tally of 55,903, which included 16,330 digital downloads and 17,177 sales-equivalent streams. So far, the only CD to sell more copies in a single week in the 2020s is Overpass Graffiti by Ed Sheeran, which sold 23,396 in 2021.

ALL AT CEE

CENTRAL CEE

Let Go (Central Cee)

SALES: 107,191

09

Released on December 15, Let Go is growing into another monster hit for Central Cee. The independent West London rapper's 19th Top 75 single sold 107,191 copies in January, boosting its overall tally to 169,725. His biggest single to date is Loading, released in 2020, which has 777,814 sales.

SURE SHOT

MIGUEL

Sure Thing (Jive/RCA)

SALES: 41,364

19

Originally released in 2010 as a single from Miguel's debut album All I Want Is You, Sure Thing became the Californian R&B star's first UK Top 10 hit in January. Powered by TikTok, the song entered the weekly chart at No.14 in January's second frame, increasing consumption for the 17th time in 18 weeks. By the end of the month, it had broken into the Top 10, and it now boasts 560,093 total sales.

The R&Bees knees: *Miguel*

PEOPLE POWER

LIBIANCA

People (Columbia)

SALES: 41,364

52

Posting a 458.8% increase in sales for January, People, by Minnesota-born singer Libianca, grew stronger throughout the month. After entering at No.60 in the second frame, it had shot up to No.18 by the time February rolled around. The 22-year-old singer and songwriter, who was once a contestant on The Voice US, has successfully translated TikTok virality into consumption, proven by the fact that People amassed more than five million UK streams across audio and video in January.

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ALBUMS CHART TOP 75

JANUARY CHART WEEKS 01-04

BRIT CERTIFIED PLATINUM, GOLD & SILVER AWARDS

★ Platinum (300,000)
● Gold (100,000)
● Silver (60,000)

TW	LW	WKS	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL CATALOGUE NUMBER (DISTRIBUTOR) (PRODUCER)
1	1	4	**Taylor Swift** Midnights EMI 4579009 (Cinram) ★ (J.Antonoff/T.Swift/J.Sweet/B.Cook/Sounwave/Keanu Beats/A.Dessner)
2	6	2	**Sza** SOS RCA/Top Dawg 0196589564931 (Cinram) ● (A.Atlantica/Buccellati/Babyface/Beat Butcha/benny blanco/B.Slatkin/BLK Beats/C.Lang/D.McKinnon/DJ Dahi/E.Rise/E.Haynie...)
3	11	24	**The Weeknd** The Highlights Republic/XO 3573443 (Cinram) ★ (The Weeknd/Max Martin/Holter/Payami/McKinney/Cirkut/Tesfaye/Dukes/Metro Boomin/Illangelo/Dre Moon/Billions Diehl...)
4	10	15	**Ed Sheeran** = Asylum 0190295859039 (Arvato) ★2 (E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid/Parisi/Fred again../J.Rubel/L.Bell/Watt/B.Gibson/E.Anderfjärd/RØMANS/F.Vance)
5	19	122	**Eminem** Curtain Call - The Hits Interscope 9887893 (Cinram) ★9 (Eminem/Dr Dre/Resto/The 45 King & Louie/DJ Head/Elizondo/Bass/The Recording Academy/Mel-Man)
6	Re-Entry		**Courteeners** St Jude Polydor/UMR 1763529 (Cinram) ● (Street/Hillier/Kirwan)
7	7	9	**Harry Styles** Harry's House Columbia 19658707272 (Cinram) ★ (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson/S.Witte)
8	13	63	**Elton John** Diamonds Mercury/UMR 6700657 (Cinram) ★3 (Dudgeon/John/Franks/Thomas/Michael/Leonard/Bell/T-Bone Burnett/Bellotte/Bacharach/C.Bayer Sager/Narada/Penny...)
9	18	111	**Arctic Monkeys** AM Domino WIGCD317 (Integral Cinram) ★5 (Ford/Orton)
10	25	45	**Lewis Capaldi** Divinely Uninspired To A Hellish Extent EMI 7747307 (Cinram) ★4 (Atkinson/Holloway/Earp/Capaldi/TMS/Cook/Pillai/Sneddon/JR Ho)
11	21	51	**Fleetwood Mac** 50 Years – Don't Stop Rhino 0603497855612 (Arvato) ★3 (Fleetwood Mac/Dashut/Caillat)
12	23	169	**ABBA** Gold - Greatest Hits Polydor 2752259 (Cinram) ★20 (Andersson/Ulvaeus)
13	14	2	**Metro Boomin** Heroes & Villains Island 0602448810441 (Cinram) (Various)
14	26	107	**Queen** Greatest Hits EMI 2761039 (Cinram) ★23 (Baker/Queen/Mack)
15	75	19	**Whitney Houston** I Will Always Love You – The Best Of... Arista 88765413932 (Cinram) ● (Kashif/Masser/NM Walden/Babyface/"LA" Reid/Foster/Clivillés/Cole/Duplessis/Wyclef/Tricky/Kiriakou/Mason/Dupri...)
16	32	109	**Oasis** Time Flies – 1994-2009 Big Brother RKIDCD66 (The Orchard/Proper) ★5 (Oasis/Coyle/Morris/Stent/Sardy/Gallagher)
17	29	21	**Olivia Rodrigo** Sour Geffen 3807744 (Cinram) ★2 (Dan Nigro/Alexander23/Jam City/A.Rodrigo)
18	28	4	**The 1975** Being Funny In A Foreign Language Dirty Hit DH1504 (Cinram) ● (M.Healy/G.Daniel/J.Antonoff/BJ Burton/G.Daniel)
19	8	2	**Sam Ryder** There's Nothing But Space, Man! Parlophone 5054197178702 (Arvato) (A.Beitzke/Coffee/D.McDougall/D.Guetta/Freedo/German/J.Leonard/J.Hartman/Jarly/KOZ/L.Allen/M.Ralph/M.Wolfgang...)
20	33	71	**Ed Sheeran** ÷ Asylum 0190295859039 (Arvato) ★13 (Mac/Sheeran/Elizondo/Hicks/B.Blanco/McDaid/Killbeatz/Labrinth)
21	New		**Clavish** Rap Game Awful Polydor 4860307 (Cinram) (Aifo/AyeTM/Chek Beatz/Disco/Elyas/Eugene Tsai/The FaNaTiX/GO Beatz/HARGO/Harry Beech/Hazey Just Landed...)
22	16	113	**Fleetwood Mac** Rumours Rhino/Warner 8122796778 (Arvato) ★14 (Fleetwood Mac/Dashut/Caillat)
23	39	15	**Little Mix** Between Us RCA 19439926272 (Cinram) ● (S.Mac/Bloodshy/Taroncher/Guetta/Saint Fleur/Electric/Duars/Goldfingers/Reynolds/Ashurst/Kearns/Goldstein/Class...)
24	51	36	**Elvis Presley** Elv1s: 30 #1 Hits RCA 07863680792 (Cinram) ★6 (S.Sholes/E.Presley/L.Newman/W.Scharf/J.Leiber/M.Stoller/Chet Atkins/B.Porter/C.Moman/F.Jarvis/S.Phillips/R.Hull)
25	New		**The Reytons** What's Rock And Roll? The Reytons REYT001CDSTAN (Absolute Proper) (D.Watts)
26	40	6	**Eminem** Curtain Call 2 Interscope 4817107 (Cinram) ● (Eminem/Aalias/Alex Da Kid/Villasana/Battle Roy/BJ Burton/Boi-1da/d.a. got that dope/DJ Khalil/Dr. Dre/DVLP/Haynie...)
27	22	3	**Drake & 21 Savage** Her Loss Columbia/OVO/Republic 0602448926227 (Cinram) ● (40/Audio Anthem/B100/BanBwoi/Boi-1da/BoogzDaBeast/Cheeze Beatz/CuBeatz/D.East/DannoProductionz...)
28	42	65	**Taylor Swift** 1989 EMI 4701883 (Cinram) ★5 (Swift/Taylor/Zancanella/MaxMartin/Shellback/Payami/Antonoff/Mattman & Robin/Kurstin/Chapman/Heap)
29	30	30	**Taylor Swift** Folklore EMI 0602435034805 (Cinram) ★ (Dessner/Antonoff/Swift)
30	48	22	**The Weeknd** Starboy Republic/XO 5727592 (Cinram) ★ (The Weeknd/McKinney/Cirkut/B.Billions/Mano/M.Martin/Payami/B.Blanco/Cashmere Cat/Jake One/Swish/Labrinth...)
31	34	90	**Oasis** (What's The Story) Morning Glory? Big Brother RKIDCD007 (The Orchard/Proper) ★16 (Morris/Gallagher)
32	57	130	**Michael Jackson** Number Ones Epic 5138002 (Cinram) ★10 (Jones/Jackson/Various)
33	35	38	**Harry Styles** Fine Line Columbia 19439705122 (Cinram) ★2 (Tyler Johnson/Kid harpoon/Witte/Kurstin/Bhasker)
34	24	16	**Sam Fender** Seventeen Going Under Polydor 3834451 (Cinram) ● (B.Bronte/R.Costey)
35	17	8	**George Ezra** Gold Rush Kid Columbia 19439984122 (Cinram) ● (J.Laslett Pott/S.Price/B.Lister/D.Moyler)
36	44	5	**D-Block Europe** Lap 5 D-Block Europe DBE10 (Virgin/Cinram) ● (D-Block Europe/Ghost Killer Track/Sheeran/London/Various)
37	50	38	**Taylor Swift** Lover EMI 7792868 (Cinram) ★ (Dukes/Bell/Swift/Antonoff/Little/Sounwave)
38	37	95	**Arctic Monkeys** Whatever People Say I Am, That's... Domino WIGCD162 (Integral Cinram) ★7 (Abbiss/Smyth)
39	54	75	**David Bowie** Legacy Parlophone 0190295919900 (Arvato) ★2 (Rodgers/Bowie/Visconti/Queen/Scott/Dudgeon/Maslin/Winstanley)
40	65	3	**Ella Henderson** Everything I Didn't Say Atlantic 0190296303524 (Arvato) (Riley/Jean-Marie/Mac & Phil/Two Inch Punch/TMS/S.de Jong/Decilveo/T.Scott/J.Carlsson/M.Kintish/S.Manovski/Green...)
41	45	40	**Lana Del Rey** Born To Die Polydor 2787091 (Cinram) ★4 (Haynie/Parker/Berger/Robopop/Bhasker/Daly/Sneddon/Bauer-Mein/Nowels/Braide/Shux/Skarbek/Howe)
42	58	23	**Taylor Swift** Reputation EMI 3003310 (Cinram) ★ (Antonoff/Swift/Martin/Shellback/Payami/Görres/Holter)
43	Re-Entry		**Maroon 5** Singles Interscope 4754556 (Cinram) ★ (Maroon 5/Wallace/Endert/B.Blanco/MaxMartin/Shellback/Robopop/Stent/Farrar/Lange/Zancanella/Levine/MdL/Ammo...)
44	74	84	**The Beatles** 1 Apple Corps 0830702 (Cinram) (McCartney)
45	41	3	**Foo Fighters** The Essential Sony Music CG 19658737752 (Cinram) (G.Norton/G.Kurstin/Foo Fighters/N.Raskulinecz/Butch Vig/B.Jones/A.Kasper)
46	62	71	**George Michael** Twenty Five Aegean 88697009002 (Cinram) ★5 (G.Michael)
47	59	13	**Becky Hill** Only Honest On The Weekend Polydor 3593658 (Cinram) ● (Banx & Ranx/Billen Ted/Guetta/Franky Wah/Jarly/Wilkinson/Jussi/LostBoy/Nord/MJ Cole/MK/MNEK/O.Hill/Shift K3Y...)
48	Re-Entry		**Dua Lipa** Future Nostalgia Warner 0190295275778 (Arvato) ★2 (Bhasker/Mones/Kirkpatrick/TMS/Price/Evigan/Koz/Ariza/SG Lewis/Watt/The Monsters & Strangerz/Lindgren...)
49	53	150	**Bob Marley & The Wailers** Legend Tuff Gong 5489042 (Cinram) ★14 (Bob Marley & The Wailers/C.Blackwell/E.Brown/J.Nuber/Scratch Perry)
50	60	21	**The Weeknd** After Hours Republic/XO 881838 (Cinram) ● (Illangelo/The Weeknd/DaHeala/Dukes/Reed/Mercereau/MaxMartin/Holter/Metro Boomin/Dre Moon/Parker/OPN...)
51	Re-Entry		**Bruno Mars** Doo-Wops & Hooligans Elektra 0075678833250 (Arvato) ★7 (The Smeezingtons/Needlz/The Supa Dups)
52	Re-Entry		**50 Cent** Best Of Polydor/UMR 5741146 (Cinram) ★ (Dr.Dre/Elizondo/Dirty Swift/ Mr.Porter/Dangerous LLC/Storch/B-Money "B$"/ Hi-Tek/C. Styles/Sire/Timbaland/Danja...)
53	New		**Gaz Coombes** Turn The Car Around Hot Fruit HF15CD (Virgin/Cinram) (Gaz Coombes/I.Davenport)
54	72	8	**Xxxtentacion** Look At Me: The Album Columbia 0196589226808 (Cinram) ● (Canis Major/Xxxtentacion/Fifty Grand/Willie G/Kellbender/Hellion/King Yosef/Ronny J/Potsu/J.Cunningham...)
55	Re-Entry		**Katy Perry** Teenage Dream Virgin CDV3084 (Cinram) ★5 (Dr Luke/Blanco/Martin/StarGate/Stewart/Harrell/Ammo/Wells)
56	Re-Entry		**Eminem** The Eminem Show Interscope 4932902 (Cinram) ★6 (Eminem/Bass/Dr Dre/DJ Head/Porter)
57	63	59	**Oasis** Definitely Maybe Big Brother RKIDCD006 (The Orchard/Proper) ★8 (Oasis/Coyle/Morris)
58	Re-Entry		**Adele** 25 XL XLCD740 (Integral Cinram) ★12 (Kurstin/MaxMartin/Shellback/Epworth/Rechtshaid/Tedder/Danger Mouse/Dixon/The Smeezingtons)
59	Re-Entry		**Lady Gaga** The Fame Interscope 2726601 (Cinram) ★10 (RedOne/Fusari/Gaga/Kierszenbaum/Orton/Space Cowboy/Kierulf/Schwartz)
60	Re-Entry		**Billy Joel** Piano Man – The Very Best Of Billy Joel Columbia 82876823592 (Cinram) ★4 (Ramone/Stewart/Joel/Jones)
61	Re-Entry		**Sam Smith** In The Lonely Hour Capitol 3769173 (Cinram) ★9 (FT Smith/Two Inch Punch/Eg White/Jimmy Napes/Fitzmaurice/Mojam/Z.Lowe/Naughty Boy/Komi/Lawrence)
62	64	10	**The Weeknd** Dawn FM Republic/XO 0602445418428 (Cinram) ● (The Weeknd/OPN/C.Harris/M.Martin/O.Holter/M.Cohn/Swedish House Mafia/J.Gitty/Rex Kudo/B.Johnston/B.Kennedy...)
63	Re-Entry		**Dua Lipa** Dua Lipa Warner 0190295938482 (Arvato) ★3 (Kozmeniuk/Axident/Big Taste/Miguel/J.Reynolds/Digital Farm Animals/Principato/Levine/Wells/Grades/Kirkpatrick...)
64	Re-Entry		**Red Hot Chili Peppers** Greatest Hits Warner 9362485452 (Arvato) ★6 (Rubin/Beinhorn)
65	46	14	**Adele** 30 Columbia 19439937972 (Cinram) ★2 (L.Göransson/F.Kurstin/Max Martin/Shellback/J.Pecoraro/Inflo/T.Jesso Jr/S.Everett)
66	Re-Entry		**Adele** 21 XL XLCD520 (Integral Cinram) ★18 (FT Smith/Rubin/Epworth/Abbiss/Wilson/Adkins)
67	Re-Entry		**Drake** Certified Lover Boy OVO/Republic 0602438865918 (Cinram) ● (Masego/Shebib/Vinylz/Maneesh/Metro Boomin/El-Khatib/Priester/Ojelade/Young/Borino/OZ/Ambezza/Thomas/AP...)
68	31	3	**Dermot Kennedy** Sonder Island 4814864 (Cinram) (S.Mac/D.Nigro/Koz/J.Shy/R.Linvill/S.Harris/C.Lowe/E.Haynie)
69	Re-Entry		**Green Day** Greatest Hits: God's Favorite Band Reprise 0093624909170 (Arvato) ★ (Ernst/Green Day/Cavallo/Vig/B.J Armstrong)
70	61	22	**Taylor Swift** Evermore EMI 3564858 (Cinram) ● (J.Antonoff/T.Swift/A.Dessner/B.Dessner/BJ Burton/J.McAlister)
71	New		**Måneskin** Rush! Columbia 19658735592 (Cinram) (Måneskin/Captain Cuts/E.Brun/F.Ferraguzzo/Mattman & Robin/Max Martin/Rami Yacoub/SLY)
72	Re-Entry		**Pop Smoke** Shoot For The Stars Aim For The Moon Republic 0602507295912 (Cinram) ★ (808Melo/Wondagurl/5ive Beatz/Tyy Beats/D.Wright/Dani/CashMoneyAP/Palaze/Jackson/M.Dean/Raab/Mobz Beatz...)
73	Re-Entry		**Dave** We're All Alone In This Together Dave Neighbourhood 3857188 (Cinram) ★ (Dave/D.Maker/Jae5/J.Blake/J.Reeves/K.Evans/P2J/Nana Rogues)
74	Re-Entry		**The Killers** Direct Hits Vertigo 3755766 (Cinram) ★3 (The Killers/Saltzman/Flood/Moulder/Price/O'Brien/Taylor/Lillywhite/Gonzalez)
75	68	24	**Arctic Monkeys** Favourite Worst Nightmare Domino WIGCD188 (Integral Cinram) ★4 (Ford/Crossey)

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ANALYSIS

***Music Week* digs into the month's top chart stories...**

Go fourth: *Taylor Swift tops the albums rankings for the fourth consecutive month*

HERO WORSHIP

TAYLOR SWIFT

Midnights (EMI)

SALES: 39,124

01

Opening 2023 at No.1 for the first two weeks, Taylor Swift's Midnights is the biggest album for the fourth consecutive month. The LP registered a further 39,124 sales in January and its total now stands at 456,090. Streaming has powered its performance so far in 2023, with 28,969 sales from streams along with 9,419 physical copies and 736 downloads. Swift's closest rival was Sza's digital-only release SOS, another strong performer on DSPs with its 34,642 sales last month almost entirely from streams. Swift's single Anti-Hero was still riding high in January at No.4 overall with a further 136,416 sales. The track, which spent six weeks at No.1 last year, has total sales of 613,277.

HEY JUDE

COURTEENERS

St Jude (Polydor/UMR)

SALES: 21,006

06

Reissued to mark its 15th anniversary, Courteeners' 2008 debut album St Jude reached No.1 for the first time last month. That impressive result for a catalogue title means that the band have made chart history: St Jude is the oldest album by a group to reach No.1 for the first time. With consumption heavily focused on physical, the LP reached the summit with sales of 19,022. The album's total for the month is 21,006, while its sales to date are now approaching platinum with 291,575.

15

Peak time: *Whitney Houston*

HIGHER LOVE

WHITNEY HOUSTON

I Will Always Love You (The Best Of) (Arista/RCA)

SALES: 14,921

Whitney Houston's catalogue continues to see a boost from I Wanna Dance With Somebody, the biopic starring Naomi Ackie. The main beneficiary is I Will Always Love You (The Best Of). Sales increased by 66.8% last month to 14,921, including 13,382 from streams and 1,498 physical units. Having spent 84 weeks on the chart, the 2012 greatest hits set has total sales of 257,144. With the film making a box office impact, the collection secured a new peak of No.13 in January.

GAME PLAN

CLAVISH

Rap Game Awful (Polydor)

SALES: 13,036

21

UK rapper Clavish made a Top 10 breakthrough last year with Rocket Science, his collaboration with D-Block Europe. The single is No.56 overall for January and has total sales of 126,668. Last month, he also went Top 5 with mixtape Rap Game Awful. The debut finishes at No.21 overall with sales of 13,036.

Numbers game: *Clavish*

PHOTO: Steve Granitz, Getty

ROCK SOLID

THE REYTONS

What's Rock And Roll? (The Reytons)

SALES: 12,252

25

The Reytons' third entry to the albums chart became their first No.1 on sales of 12,252 at the end of January. That single week of consumption helps the band from South Yorkshire finish the month at No.25 overall. The breakdown for the group's chart-topping result for What's Rock And Roll? is 5,430 vinyl albums, 4,131 CDs, 1,039 digital downloads, 894 cassettes and 758 sales-equivalent streams.

ITALIAN JOB

MÅNESKIN

Rush! (Columbia)

SALES: 6,681

71

Former Eurovision winners Måneskin made their first ever Top 10 UK albums chart appearance last month. The Italian rock band's third album, Rush!, debuted at No.5 with 6,681 sales at the end of January. Their previous best was No.49 with Teatro D'Ira Volume 1 in 2021. Måneskin made a big impression on the singles chart in the same year with simultaneous Top 10 appearances for I Wanna Be Your Slave and Beggin'.

Music Week Market Shares

Artist Singles share for the month measures share of the Top 75 best performing tracks of the month, across sales and audio streams.
Artist Albums share for the month measures share of the Top 75 Official Albums Chart.
AES = Album Equivalent Sales. SEA = Stream Equivalent Albums

THIS MONTH'S CHART SHARE

TOP 75 CHART BY CORPORATE GROUP

SINGLES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.50%
2	SONY MUSIC	27.55%
3	WARNER MUSIC	21.70%
4	HUMAN RE SOURCES	4.56%
5	CENTRAL CEE	3.09%
	OTHERS	8.59%

ARTIST ALBUMS NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	51.52%
2	SONY MUSIC	23.31%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.39%
4	DOMINO	3.87%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.62%
	OTHERS	4.28%

ALL ALBUMS NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	49.80%
2	SONY MUSIC	23.99%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.46%
4	DOMINO	3.12%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.61%
	OTHERS	5.02%

TOP 75 CHART BY RECORD COMPANY

SINGLES NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	17.90%
2	EMI	13.79%
3	ATLANTIC	13.07%
4	POLYDOR	8.89%
5	COLUMBIA	8.78%
6	ISLAND	8.36%
7	HUMAN RE SOURCES	4.56%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.98%
9	WARNER RECORDS	3.68%
10	CENTRAL CEE	3.09%
11	VIRGIN MUSIC	2.18%
12	BSOMEBODY	1.75%
13	ATLANTIC/COLUMBIA	1.36%
14	0207 DEF JAM	1.28%
15	COLUMBIA7/ISLAND13	1.19%
	OTHERS	6.14%

ARTIST ALBUMS NO. 1 POLYDOR

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	POLYDOR	18.71%
2	EMI	18.31%
3	ISLAND	10.78%
4	RCA	10.71%
5	COLUMBIA	7.07%
6	ATLANTIC	6.05%
7	RHINO (WARNERS)	4.47%
8	DOMINO	3.87%
9	BIG BROTHER	3.71%
10	WARNER RECORDS	3.35%
11	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.96%
12	SONY MUSIC CG	1.82%
13	XL RECORDINGS	1.62%
14	DIRTY HIT	1.53%
15	PARLOPHONE	1.51%
	OTHERS	4.52%

ALL ALBUMS NO. 1 POLYDOR

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	POLYDOR	17.85%
2	EMI	17.48%
3	ISLAND	10.72%
4	RCA	10.66%
5	ATLANTIC	7.18%
6	COLUMBIA	7.03%
7	RHINO (WARNERS)	4.44%
8	BIG BROTHER	3.69%
9	WARNER RECORDS	3.33%
10	DOMINO	3.12%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	2.61%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.95%
13	UMR	1.79%
14	XL RECORDINGS	1.61%
15	DIRTY HIT	1.52%
	OTHERS	5.01%

THIS MONTH'S TOTAL MARKET SHARE

BY CORPORATE GROUP

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	35.1%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.4%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.0%
4	XL BEGGARS	1.1%
5	BMG	1.1%
	OTHERS	27.5%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.0%
2	SONY MUSIC	21.9%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.4%
4	BMG	1.9%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.0%
	OTHERS	24.9%

ARTIST ALBUM SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	30.8%
2	WARNER MUSIC	15.8%
3	SONY MUSIC	14.0%
4	BMG	5.7%
5	XL BEGGARS	2.1%
	OTHERS	31.6%

BY RECORD COMPANY

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	10.6%
2	EMI	10.4%
3	POLYDOR	9.3%
4	ISLAND	7.8%
5	COLUMBIA	6.5%
6	ATLANTIC	6.3%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.2%
10	SONY MUSIC CG	1.7%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.6%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.5%
13	DECCA	1.4%
14	0207 DEF JAM	0.7%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.6%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	13.4%
2	EMI	13.2%
3	POLYDOR	7.3%
4	ISLAND	6.6%
5	ATLANTIC	5.6%
6	COLUMBIA	5.5%
7	PARLOPHONE	4.1%
8	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.4%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.9%
12	DECCA	1.5%
13	BMG	1.0%
14	VIRGIN MUSIC	0.9%
15	SANCTUARY	0.5%
	OTHERS	29.7%

ARTIST ALBUM SALES NO. 1 POLYDOR

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	POLYDOR	8.2%
2	EMI	8.2%
3	RHINO (WARNERS)	6.4%
4	COLUMBIA	5.0%
5	BMG	4.4%
6	SONY MUSIC CG	4.2%
7	UMR	4.0%
8	RCA	3.6%
9	ISLAND	3.6%
10	PARLOPHONE	3.3%
11	WARNER RECORDS	3.2%
12	DECCA	2.9%
13	ATLANTIC	2.3%
14	DOMINO	1.5%
15	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.3%
	OTHERS	37.9%

AES (ALL ALBUMS) TOTAL MARKET - THIS MONTH

1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.7%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.0%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.0%
4	BMG	1.7%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.2%
	OTHERS	27.4%

BY CORPORATE GROUP

1	EMI	10.3%
2	RCA	9.9%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	7.2%
5	COLUMBIA	6.3%
6	ATLANTIC	5.8%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.7%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.6%
10	SONY MUSIC CG	2.3%
	OTHERS	39.8%

BY RECORD COMPANY

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS) TOTAL MARKET - THIS MONTH

1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.7%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.8%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.1%
4	BMG	1.6%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.2%
	OTHERS	27.6%

BY CORPORATE GROUP

1	EMI	10.2%
2	RCA	10.0%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	7.3%
5	COLUMBIA	6.3%
6	ATLANTIC	5.9%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.9%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.2%
	OTHERS	39.8%

BY RECORD COMPANY

MARKET STATISTICS - THIS MONTH

DATE	SINGLES				ARTIST ALBUMS				COMPS	ALL ALBUMS		
	SALES	AUDIO STREAMS	VIDEO STREAMS	TOTAL	PHYSICAL	DOWNLOADS	SEA2	TOTAL	TOTAL	SALES	SEA2	TOTAL
THIS MONTH	1,196,297	10,873,772,051	725,728,147	98,879,704	1,017,975	160,212	6,731,324	7,909,510	288,372	1,330,729	6,867,154	8,197,882
LAST MONTH	1,593,560	13,817,782,405	924,451,685	125,816,909	2,515,213	215,052	7,875,131	10,605,396	560,665	3,150,088	8,015,973	11,166,061
% CHANGE	-24.9%	-21.3%	-21.5%	-21.4%	-59.5%	-25.5%	-14.5%	-25.4%	-48.6%	-57.8%	-14.3%	-26.6%

Your essential guide to the market shares for this month and 2023. Compiled from Official Charts Company data.

Official Charts Company

YEAR-TO-DATE TOTAL MARKET SHARE

BY CORPORATE GROUP

COMPILATION SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	40.3%
2	SONY MUSIC	31.3%
3	BMG	7.2%
4	WARNER MUSIC	4.4%
5	CHERRY RED	1.4%
	OTHERS	15.4%

ALL ALBUM SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	31.9%
2	SONY MUSIC	15.9%
3	WARNER MUSIC	14.5%
4	BMG	5.9%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.9%
	OTHERS	29.9%

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	35.1%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.4%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.0%
4	XL BEGGARS	1.1%
5	BMG	1.1%
	OTHERS	27.5%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.0%
2	SONY MUSIC	21.9%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.4%
4	BMG	1.9%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.0%
	OTHERS	24.9%

AES (ALL ALBUMS) NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.7%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.0%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.0%
4	BMG	1.7%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.2%
	OTHERS	27.4%

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS) NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	34.7%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.8%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.1%
4	BMG	1.6%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.2%
	OTHERS	27.6%

BY RECORD COMPANY

COMPILATION SALES NO. 1 SONY CG

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	SONY MUSIC CG	23.8%
2	EMI	18.2%
3	UMR	12.3%
4	COLUMBIA	5.3%
5	BMG	4.5%
6	DECCA	4.2%
7	POLYDOR	2.8%
8	UNION SQUARE	2.4%
9	RCA	1.9%
10	ISLAND	1.6%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.6%
12	ATLANTIC	1.5%
13	CHERRY RED	1.4%
14	DEMON MUSIC	1.0%
15	NEW STATE	0.9%
	OTHERS	16.7%

ALL ALBUM SALES NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	9.3%
2	POLYDOR	7.6%
3	SONY MUSIC CG	6.4%
4	RHINO (WARNERS)	5.9%
5	COLUMBIA	5.0%
6	UMR	5.0%
7	BMG	4.4%
8	RCA	3.4%
9	ISLAND	3.3%
10	DECCA	3.0%
11	PARLOPHONE	3.0%
12	WARNER RECORDS	2.9%
13	ATLANTIC	2.2%
14	DOMINO	1.3%
15	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.2%
	OTHERS	36.0%

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	10.6%
2	EMI	10.4%
3	POLYDOR	9.3%
4	ISLAND	7.8%
5	COLUMBIA	6.5%
6	ATLANTIC	6.3%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.2%
10	SONY MUSIC CG	1.7%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.6%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.5%
13	DECCA	1.4%
14	0207 DEF JAM	0.7%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.6%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	13.4%
2	EMI	13.2%
3	POLYDOR	7.3%
4	ISLAND	6.6%
5	ATLANTIC	5.6%
6	COLUMBIA	5.5%
7	PARLOPHONE	4.1%
8	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.4%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.9%
12	DECCA	1.5%
13	BMG	1.0%
14	VIRGIN MUSIC	0.9%
15	SANCTUARY	0.5%
	OTHERS	29.7%

AES (ALL ALBUMS) NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	10.3%
2	RCA	9.9%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	7.2%
5	COLUMBIA	6.3%
6	ATLANTIC	5.8%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.7%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.6%
10	SONY MUSIC CG	2.3%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.2%
12	DECCA	1.6%
13	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
14	BMG	1.1%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.8%

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS) NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	10.2%
2	RCA	10.0%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	7.3%
5	COLUMBIA	6.3%
6	ATLANTIC	5.9%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.9%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.2%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	2.0%
12	DECCA	1.6%
13	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
14	BMG	1.1%
15	DOMINO	0.8%
	OTHERS	32.9%

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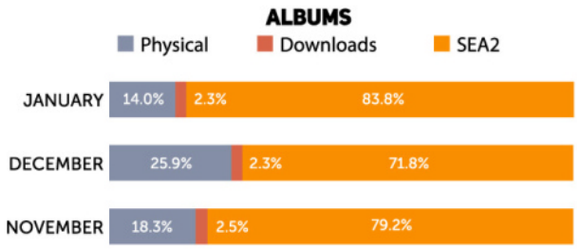

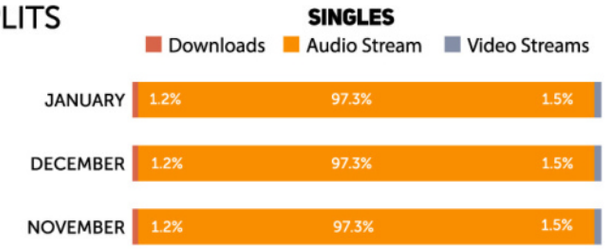

MARKET STATISTICS - YEAR-TO-DATE

DATE	SINGLES				ARTIST ALBUMS				COMPS	ALL ALBUMS		
	SALES	AUDIO STREAMS	VIDEO STREAMS	TOTAL	PHYSICAL	DOWNLOADS	SEA2	TOTAL	TOTAL	SALES	SEA2	TOTAL
THIS YEAR	1,196,297	10,873,772,050	725,728,147	98,879,703	1,017,975	160,212	6,731,324	7,909,511	288,372	1,330,729	6,867,154	8,197,883
LAST YEAR	1,349,518	10,054,247,491	758,255,323	92,433,779	1,038,170	196,086	6,364,505	7,598,761	351,736	1,428,820	6,521,678	7,950,498
% CHANGE	-11.4%	8.2%	-4.3%	7.0%	-1.9%	-18.3%	5.8%	4.1%	-18.0%	-6.9%	5.3%	3.1%

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OFFICIAL UK STREAMING TOP 50

Official Streaming Chart

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Raye Ft 070 Shake	Escapism	Human Re Sources
2	Miley Cyrus	Flowers	RCA
3	Sza	Kill Bill	RCA/Top Dawg
4	Taylor Swift	Anti-Hero	EMI
5	Venbee & Goddard	Messy In Heaven	Columbia
6	Central Cee	Let Go	Central Cee
7	David Guetta & Bebe Rexha	I'm Good (Blue)	Parlophone
8	Sam Smith & Kim Petras	Unholy	Capitol
9	Rema & Selena Gomez	Calm Down	Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin
10	Meghan Trainor	Made You Look	RCA
11	Oliver Tree & Robin Schulz	Miss You	Atlantic
12	Bugzy Malone & TeeDee	Out Of Nowhere	B-Somebody
13	Tom Odell	Another Love	Columbia
14	Metro Boomin, The Weeknd & 21 Savage	Creepin'	Republic
15	Harry Styles	As It Was	Columbia
16	Lewis Capaldi	Forget Me	EMI
17	Anne-Marie & Aitch	Psycho	Asylum/Major Tom's
18	Miguel	Sure Thing	Jive
19	OneRepublic	I Ain't Worried	Interscope
20	Eliza Rose & Interplanetary Criminal	B.O.T.A. (Baddest Of Them All)	Warner/X One House
21	Lewis Capaldi	Pointless	EMI
22	Chris Brown	Under The Influence	RCA
23	Stormzy	Hide & Seek	0207/Merky
24	Ed Sheeran	Bad Habits	Asylum
25	LF System	Afraid To Feel	Warner
26	Steve Lacy	Bad Habit	L-M/RCA
27	Beyoncé	Cuff It	Columbia/Parkwood Ent.
28	Tiësto & Tate McRae	10:35	Atlantic/Ministry Of Sound
29	Jvke	Golden Hour	Jvke
30	Ed Sheeran	Shivers	Asylum
31	Drake & 21 Savage	Rich Flex	Columbia/OVO/Republic
32	George Ezra	Green Green Grass	Columbia
33	Burna Boy	Last Last	Atlantic
34	Stephen Sanchez	Until I Found You	Republic
35	Glass Animals	Heat Waves	Polydor
36	Dean Lewis	How Do I Say Goodbye	Island
37	Cat Burns	Go	RCA/Since 93
38	Lewis Capaldi	Someone You Loved	EMI
39	The Killers	Mr Brightside	Vertigo
40	Eminem	Mockingbird	Interscope
41	Clavish Ft D-Block Europe	Rocket Science	Polydor
42	The Neighbourhood	Sweater Weather	Columbia
43	Joel Corry & Tom Grennan	Lionheart (Fearless)	Atlantic
44	Cian Ducrot	I'll Be Waiting	Polydor
45	Kate Bush	Running Up That Hill	Fish People
46	Pinkfong	Baby Shark	Relentless
47	Dermot Kennedy	Kiss Me	Island
48	The Weeknd	Save Your Tears	Republic/XO
49	Lady Gaga	Bloody Mary	Interscope
50	Central Cee	Doja	Central Cee

OFFICIAL COMPILATIONS TOP 50

TM	TITLE	LABEL	DISTRIBUTOR
1	The Greatest Showman	Atlantic	Arvato
2	Roald Dahl's Matilda: The Musical	Sony Classical	Cinram
3	Encanto	Walt Disney	Cinram
4	Now That's What I Call Music! 113	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
5	Moana	Walt Disney	Cinram
6	Hamilton	Atlantic	Arvato
7	Suicide Squad: The Album	Atlantic	Arvato
8	Mamma Mia!	Polydor	Cinram
9	Frozen	Walt Disney	Cinram
10	Now Yearbook Extra 1985	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
11	Frozen II – OST	Walt Disney	Cinram
12	The Annual 2023	Ministry Of Sound	Cinram
13	Six: The Musical	Loud Mouth	Absolute Cinram
14	Now #1s	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
15	Disney's Lullaby Album	Walt Disney	Cinram
16	Now That's What I Call A Massive 80s	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
17	Fifty Shades Of Grey	Republic	Cinram
18	The Lion King	Walt Disney	Cinram
19	Grease	Polydor	Cinram
20	A Star Is Born	Interscope	Cinram
21	Top Gun: Maverick	Polydor	Cinram
22	Sing – OST	Republic	Cinram
23	Dreamboats & Petticoats: What A...	Decca	Cinram
24	Fantastic 70s	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	Cinram
25	Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again	Polydor	Cinram
26	Sing 2	Island	Cinram
27	Phil Collins Plays Well With Others	Rhino	Arvato
28	Aladdin	Walt Disney	Cinram
29	Ultimate Decades	Union Square	ADA Arvato
30	The #1 80s Synth Pop Album	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	Cinram
31	Black Panther: Wakanda Forever – OST	Def Jam/Hollywood/Roc Nation	Cinram
32	Forgotten Hits: The Ultimate Collection	BMG	ADA Arvato
33	The Fault In Our Stars	Atlantic	Arvato
34	Now That's What I Call Music! 112	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
35	The Hits Album: The Country Album	Sony Music CG	Cinram
36	It's Party Time	Spectrum	Cinram
37	Dear Evan Hansen	Atlantic	Arvato
38	The Greatest Showman Reimagined	Atlantic	Arvato
39	Cabaret At The Kitkat Club	Decca	Cinram
40	Now Yearbook 1980-1984: Final Chapter	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
41	Dreamboats & Petticoats: Small Faces...	Spectrum	Cinram
42	Guardians Of The Galaxy: Awesome Mix 1	Hollywood	Cinram
43	Descendants 3 - OST	Walt Disney	Cinram
44	Now That's What I Call Timeless... The Songs	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
45	Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse	Republic	Cinram
46	Eurovision Song Contest: Turin 2022	Universal	Cinram
47	Now That's What I Call 90s: Dancefloor	Sony Music CG/EMI	Cinram
48	Wicked	Decca	Cinram
49	La La Land	Interscope/Polydor	Cinram
50	Beauty And The Beast	Walt Disney	Cinram

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Official Charts Company

OFFICIAL VINYL TOP 50s

OFFICIAL VINYL SINGLES

PHOTO: Sirus Gahan

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Loyle Carner Ft John Agard	Georgetown	EMI
2	The Specials	Ghost Town	Chrysalis
3	LF System	Hungry (For Love)	Warner
4	Ben Howard	Burgh Island	Island
5	The Wedding Present	The Loneliest Time Of Year	Scopitones
6	Duran Duran	All Of You	BMG
7	New Order	Blue Monday	Rhino
8	The White Stripes	Seven Nation Army	Sony Music CG
9	Grandmaster Flash & The Furious...	The Message	Sanctuary
10	The Specials	Work In Progress Versions	Chrysalis
11	The Cribs	Happy In Town	Kill Rock Stars
12	De La Soul	The Magic Number	Tommy Boy
13	Phoebe Bridgers	Kyoto	Dead Oceans
14	Cigarettes After Sex	Nothing's Gonna Hurt You Baby	Spanish Prayers
15	Slade	Merry Xmas Everybody	BMG
16	Jamiroquai	Everybody's Going To The Moon	S2
17	Liam Gallagher	All You're Dreaming Of	Warner
18	Black Country, New Road	I Think I Need A New Heart	Ninja Tune
19	Status Quo	It's Christmas Time	UMOD
20	Lewis Capaldi	Forget Me	EMI
21	Bastille	Million Pieces	Virgin
22	Bastille	Doom Days	Virgin
23	Chas & Dave	Margate	Crimson
24	The 1975	Facedown	Dirty Hit
25	Baddiel/Skinner & The Lightning...	3 Lions	Epic
26	Madonna	Erotica	Sire
27	Joy Division	Love Will Tear Us Apart	Rhino
28	Alva Noto	Subterraneans	Noton
29	Harry Styles	Late Night Talking	Columbia
30	Pink Floyd Ft Andriy Khlyvnyuk	Hey Hey Rise Up	Rhino
31	Ghost	Hunter's Moon	Loma Vista
32	Arlo Parks	Super Sad Generation	Beatnik Creative
33	The Smile	Open The Floodgates	XL
34	The Prodigy	Firestarter	XL
35	The Lathums	Sad Face Baby	Island
36	The Clash	Rock The Casbah	Columbia
37	Girls Aloud	Sound Of The Underground	Polydor
38	Madonna	Everybody	WEA
39	Horace Andy	Watch Over Them	On-U Sound
40	Pete Wylie & Mighty Wah	The Story Of The Blues	Chrysalis
41	Arlo Parks	Cola	Beatnik Creative
42	Yard Act	Dark Days	Zen FC
43	Kelly Lee Owens	Rituals	Smalltown Supersound
44	Joe Strummer	Junco Partner	BMG
45	Ozzy Osbourne & Lemmy	Hellraiser	Epic
46	Stardust	Music Sounds Better With You	Because
47	KH	Looking At Your Pager	Ministry Of Sound
48	Inhaler	These Are The Days	Polydor
49	Jake Bugg	All I Need	RCA
50	Queen	Face It Alone	EMI

OFFICIAL VINYL ALBUMS

PHOTO: Deirdre O'Callaghan

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	The Courteeners	St Jude	A&M
2	The Reytons	What's Rock And Roll?	The Reytons
3	Taylor Swift	Midnights	EMI
4	Fleetwood Mac	Rumours	WEA
5	Gaz Coombes	Turn The Car Around	Hot Fruit
6	Pink Floyd	The Dark Side Of The Moon	Rhino
7	Arctic Monkeys	AM	Domino
8	Harry Styles	Harry's House	Columbia
9	The Murder Capital	Gigi's Recovery	Human Season
10	Måneskin	Rush	Columbia
11	Belle & Sebastian	Late Developers	Matador
12	Amy Winehouse	Back To Black	Island
13	The Trashcan Sinatras	A Happy Pocket	Last Night From Glasgow
14	The 1975	Being Funny In A Foreign Language	Dirty Hit
15	The Beatles	Abbey Road	Apple Corps
16	Arctic Monkeys	The Car	Domino
17	David Bowie	The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust	Simply Vinyl
18	Oasis	(What's The Story) Morning Glory	Big Brother
19	Joesef	Permanent Damage	Bold Cut
20	Taylor Swift	Reputation	EMI
21	Nirvana	Nevermind	Geffen
22	Circa Waves	Never Going Under	Lower Third
23	Taylor Swift	Folklore	EMI
24	The Smiths	Hatful Of Hollow	WEA
25	Bob Marley & The Wailers	Legend	Tuff Gong
26	The Beatles	The Beatles	Apple Corps
27	Pink Floyd	Wish You Were Here	Rhino
28	Fleetwood Mac	Greatest Hits	Rhino
29	Arctic Monkeys	Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not	Domino
30	Black Star Riders	Wrong Side Of Paradise	Earache
31	The Smiths	The Queen Is Dead	Rhino
32	Wet Leg	Wet Leg	Domino
33	Sam Fender	Live From Finsbury Park	Polydor
34	Sam Fender	Seventeen Going Under	Polydor
35	Oasis	Definitely Maybe	Big Brother
36	Kate Bush	Hounds Of Love	Simply Vinyl
37	Olivia Rodrigo	Sour	Geffen
38	Billy Nomates	Cacti	Invada
39	Arctic Monkeys	Favourite Worst Nightmare	Domino
40	Iggy Pop	Every Loser	Atlantic
41	Green Day	American Idiot	Reprise
42	Sam Fender	Hypersonic Missiles	Polydor
43	Harry Styles	Fine Line	Columbia
44	Queen	Greatest Hits	Universal
45	Various	Guardians Of The Galaxy: Awesome Mix 1 - OST	Hollywood
46	Fontaines DC	Skinty Fia	Partisan
47	The Killers	Hot Fuss	UMR/Virgin
48	Pulp	Different Class	Simply Vinyl
49	Taylor Swift	1989	EMI
50	Louis Tomlinson	Faith In The Future	BMG

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SPECIALIST ALBUMS TOP 20s

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OFFICIAL AMERICANA TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Bruce Springsteen	Only The Strong Survive	Columbia
2	Noah Kahan	Stick Season	Republic
3	First Aid Kit	Palomino	Columbia
4	Margo Price	Strays	Loma Vista
5	Zach Bryan	American Heartbreak	Warner
6	Wilco	Cruel Country	DBpm
7	Weyes Blood	And In The Darkness, Hearts Aglow	Sub Pop
8	Big Thief	Dragon New Warm Mountain I Believe...	4AD
9	Wunderhorse	Cub	Communion
10	Marcus Mumford	(Self-Titled)	Island
11	Neil Young & Crazy Horse	World Record	Reprise
12	Sheryl Crow	Sheryl: Music From The Feature Documentary	Polydor/UMR
13	The Black Keys	Dropout Boogie	Nonesuch
14	Noah Cyrus	The Hardest Part	RCA
15	Lainey Wilson	Bell Bottom Country	Broken Bow
16	Alex G	God Save The Animals	Domino
17	David Crosby	For Free	BMG
18	The War On Drugs	I Don't Live Here Anymore	Atlantic
19	Leann Rimes	God's Work	EverLe
20	Robert Plant & Alison Krauss	Raise The Roof	East West/Rhino

OFFICIAL CLASSICAL ARTIST TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Ludovico Einaudi	Islands: Essential Einaudi	Decca
2	Max Richter	Sleep	Deutsche Grammophon
3	André Rieu & Johann Strauss Or.	Silver Bells	Decca
4	Ludovico Einaudi	Underwater	Decca
5	Ludovico Einaudi	In A Time Lapse	Decca
6	Max Richter	Voyager – Essential	Deutsche Grammophon
7	Alan Menken	The Little Mermaid – OST	Walt Disney
8	Ludovico Einaudi	Cinema	Decca
9	London Philharmonic & Ben Gernon	Spatial Audio - 3D Classical Collection	Warner Classics
10	Jóhann Jóhannsson	The Theory Of Everything – OST	Back Lot
11	Ludovico Einaudi	Una Mattina	Decca
12	Howard Shore	The Lord Of The Rings: Trilogy – OST	Reprise
13	Max Richter	The Blue Notebooks	Deutsche Grammophon
14	Aled Jones & Russell Watson	Christmas With Aled & Russell	BMG
15	LPO & Parry	The 50 Greatest Pieces Of Classical Music	X5
16	Hans Zimmer & Lisa Gerrard	Gladiator – OST	Decca
17	Howard Shore	The Lord Of The Rings: Trilogy – OST	Reprise
18	Mario Lanza	The Ultimate Collection	RCA Victor
19	André Rieu & Johann Strauss Or.	My Music: My World – The Very Best Of	Decca
20	Bear McCreary	God Of War: Ragnarök – OST	Sony Classical

OFFICIAL HIP-HOP & R&B TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Sza	SOS	RCA/Top Dawg
2	The Weeknd	The Highlights	Republic/XO
3	Eminem	Curtain Call: The Hits	Interscope
4	Metro Boomin	Heroes & Villains	Island
5	Whitney Houston	I Will Always Love You: The Best Of	Arista
6	Clavish	Rap Game Awful	Polydor
7	Eminem	Curtain Call 2	Interscope
8	Drake & 21 Savage	Her Loss	Columbia/OVO/Republic
9	The Weeknd	Starboy	Republic/XO
10	D-Block Europe	Lap 5	D-Block Europe
11	The Weeknd	After Hours	Republic/XO
12	50 Cent	Best Of	Polydor/UMR
13	Xxxtentacion	Look At Me: The Album	Columbia
14	Eminem	The Eminem Show	Interscope
15	The Weeknd	Dawn FM	Republic/XO
16	Drake	Certified Lover Boy	OVO/Republic
17	Pop Smoke	Shoot For The Stars, Aim For The Moon	Republic
18	Dave	We're All Alone In This Together	Dave Neighbourhood
19	Amy Winehouse	Back To Black	Island
20	Stormzy	This Is What I Mean	0207 Def Jam/Merky

OFFICIAL JAZZ TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Getty

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Glenn Miller	From Rags To Riches	Jazz Band
2	Sade	The Best Of Sade	Epic
3	Norah Jones	Come Away With Me	Blue Note
4	Various	Cabaret At The Kitkat Club – OST	Decca
5	Sade	Lovers Live	Epic
6	Miles Davis	Kind Of Blue	Columbia
7	Ezra Collective	Where I'm Meant To Be	Partisan
8	Ella Fitzgerald	Gold	Verve
9	Nina Simone	See-Line Woman: The Best Of	Spectrum
10	Lady Blackbird	Black Acid Soul	BMG
11	Nina Simone	Feeling Good	Verve
12	Amy Winehouse	Frank	Island
13	Sade	Lovers Rock	Epic
14	Gregory Porter	Still Rising: The Collection	Decca
15	Louis Armstrong & Ella Fitzgerald	Cheek To Cheek: The Complete Duet....	Verve
16	Norah Jones	iTunes Originals	Virgin
17	Nat King Cole	Stardust	Woowi
18	Nat King Cole	The Absolutely Essential Collection	Big 3
19	Nat King Cole	The Very Best Of Nat King Cole	Acrobat
20	Frank Sinatra	A Man And His Music	UMR

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SPECIALIST ALBUMS TOP 20s

OFFICIAL COUNTRY ARTIST TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Beth Garrabrant

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Taylor Swift	Fearless (Taylor's Version)	EMI
2	Luke Combs	What You See Is What You Get	Sony Music CG
3	Luke Combs	Growin' Up	Sony Music CG
4	Luke Combs	This One's For You	Sony Music CG
5	Shania Twain	Come On Over	Mercury
6	Taylor Swift	Fearless	Mercury
7	Taylor Swift	Taylor Swift	Mercury
8	Margo Price	Strays	Loma Vista
9	Morgan Wallen	Dangerous: The Double Album	EMI
10	Zach Bryan	American Heartbreak	Warner
11	Chris Stapleton	Traveller	Mercury Nashville
12	Glen Campbell	Adiós	UMR
13	Glen Campbell	Gentle On My Mind	UMR/Virgin
14	Dolly Parton	Dumplin' – OST	Sony Music CG
15	Kacey Musgraves	Golden Hour	MCA Nashville
16	Chris Stapleton	Starting Over	Decca
17	Noah Cyrus	The Hardest Part	RCA
18	Kelsea Ballerini	Subject To Change	Black River Ent.
19	Florida Georgia Line	The Acoustic Sessions	Big Machine
20	The Chicks	Wide Open Spaces	Epic

OFFICIAL DANCE TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	David Guetta	One Love	Parlophone
2	Calvin Harris	18 Months	Columbia
3	Fred Again..	Actual Life 3 (Jan 1 – Sep 9 2022)	Atlantic
4	Robin Schulz	Prayer	Atlantic
5	Drake	Honestly, Nevermind	OVO/Republic
6	David Guetta	Nothing But The Beat	Parlophone
7	Jax Jones	Snacks	Polydor
8	David Guetta	Nothing But The Beat 2.0	Parlophone
9	The Prodigy	Their Law: The Singles 1990-2005	XL
10	Bad Boy Chiller Crew	Disrespectful	Relentless
11	Sigala	Brighter Days	Ministry Of Sound
12	Jonas Blue	Blue	Positiva
13	Britney Spears	B In The Mix: The Remixes Vol 2	Jive
14	Disclosure	Settle	PMR
15	Black Eyed Peas	The Beginning	Interscope
16	Fred Again..	Actual Life (Apr 14 - Dec 17 2020)	Atlantic
17	Major Lazer	Major Lazer Essentials	Because
18	Calvin Harris	Motion	Columbia
19	CamelPhat	Dark Matter	RCA
20	Fred Again..	Actual Life 2 (Feb 2 - Oct 15 2021)	Atlantic

OFFICIAL FOLK TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	James Yorkston/Nina Persson	The Great White Sea Eagle	Domino
2	Marcus Mumford	(Self-Titled)	Island
3	Mary Wallopers	The Mary Wallopers	BC
4	Jessie Buckley & Bernard Butler	For All Our Days That Tear The Heart	EMI
5	The Unthanks	Sorrows Away	Rabblerouser
6	Richard Dawson	The Ruby Cord	Weird World
7	Angeline Morrison	The Sorrow Songs (Folk Songs Of Black...)	Topic
8	Duncan Chisholm	Black Cuillin	Copperfish
9	The Longest Johns	Smoke & Oakum	Decca
10	The Magpie Arc	Glamour In The Grey	Collective Perspective
11	Kate Rusby	30: Happy Returns	Pure
12	Passenger	Birds That Flew And Ships That Sailed	Black Crow
13	Hamish Hawk	Heavy Elevator	Assai
14	Eliza Carthy & The Restitution	Queen Of The Whirl	Hem Hem
15	Mànran	Ùrar	Mànran
16	Ferocious Dog	The Hope	Graphite
17	Martyn Joseph	1960	Pipe
18	Elephant Sessions	For The Night	Elephant Sessions
19	The Levellers	The Lockdown Sessions	On The Fiddle
20	Sam Sweeney	Escape That	Hudson

OFFICIAL ROCK & METAL TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Foo Fighters	The Essential	Sony Music CG
2	Green Day	Greatest Hits: God's Favorite Band	Reprise
3	Maneskin	Rush	Columbia
4	Nirvana	Nevermind	Geffen/UMR
5	Black Star Riders	Wrong Side Of Paradise	Earache
6	Nirvana	Nirvana	Geffen
7	Guns N' Roses	Greatest Hits	Geffen
8	Blink 182	Greatest Hits	Geffen
9	AC/DC	Iron Man 2 - OST	Columbia
10	Linkin Park	Hybrid Theory	Warner
11	Metallica	Metallica	Vertigo
12	Green Day	American Idiot	Reprise
13	AC/DC	Back In Black	Epic
14	Nickelback	The Best Of Nickelback, Vol 1	Rhino
15	Led Zeppelin	Mothership	Rhino
16	Slipknot	Antennas To Hell	Roadrunner
17	My Chemical Romance	May Death Never Stop You	Reprise
18	Guns N' Roses	Appetite For Destruction	Polydor/UMR
19	Linkin Park	Hybrid Theory/Reanimation	Warner
20	System Of A Down	System Of A Down	American

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UK AIRPLAY

CHARTS KEY
HIGHEST NEW ENTRY
HIGHEST CLIMBER
PLAY/AUDIENCE INCREASE
TREND INCREASE +50%

RADIO MONITOR we're always listening

Music Week's UK and EU Radio Airplay chart based on RadioMonitor data ©.

UK RADIO AIRPLAY TOP 50

TM	LM	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	TREND%	STNS	IMPACTS	TREND%
1	4	Lewis Capaldi Pointless EMI	UMG	17,470	45%	230	178.38	-6%
2	NEW	Miley Cyrus Flowers RCA	SME	11,492	-	241	175.64	-
3	8	Lewis Capaldi Forget Me EMI	UMG	21,453	-2%	194	174.64	-1%
4	1	Pink Never Gonna Not Dance Again RCA	SME	22,450	5%	229	167.	-24%
5	RE	Tiësto & Tate McRae 10:35 Atlantic/Ministry Of Sound	WMG	14,479	52%	215	165.13	183%
6	10	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero EMI	UMG	21,157	-5%	240	143.16	-15%
7	22	Lizzo 2 Be Loved (Am I Ready) Atlantic	WMG	18,305	11%	222	140.43	12%
8	17	Meghan Trainor Made You Look RCA	SME	18,274	7%	225	138.07	-2%
9	30	David Guetta & Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue) Parlophone	WMG	17,458	15%	216	137.17	48%
10	15	Ed Sheeran Celestial Asylum	WMG	18,633	-9%	221	137.08	-10%
11	23	David Guetta... Crazy What Love Can Do Parlophone	WMG	14,838	0%	222	120.49	4%
12	16	Joel Corry & Tom Grennan Lionheart (Fearless) Atlantic	WMG	19,143	-8%	229	119.99	-18%
13	NEW	Raye Ft 070 Shake Escapism Human Re Sources	IND.	9,062	135%	173	109.61	72%
14	NEW	Mimi Webb Red Flags Epic	SME	6,164	-	204	108.05	-
15	NEW	Taylor Swift Lavender Haze EMI	UMG	6,457	-	167	96.06	-
16	NEW	Shania Twain Giddy Up! EMI	UMG	1,682	-	70	92.2	-
17	NEW	Louise Super Magic Tag8/BMG	IND.	920	1408%	34	91.79	948%
18	NEW	Years & Years 100% Pure Love Polydor	UMG	2,418	50%	65	88.38	359%
19	NEW	Thomas Headon Georgia Warner	WMG	2,092	1258%	91	88.23	63%
20	NEW	Revival & Kathy Brown Ft GeO... Your Love... Revival	IND.	835	492%	79	87.68	298%
21	28	Jax Jones Ft MNEK Where Did You Go? Polydor	UMG	12,676	-2%	224	87.05	-12%
22	34	Harry Styles Late Night Talking Columbia	SME	12,206	-2%	227	84.88	-4%
23	NEW	Sza Kill Bill RCA/Top Dawg	SME	5,187	3290%	133	84.85	6725%
24	48	Nathan Dawe & Talia Mar Sweet Lies Atlantic	WMG	8,832	-19%	175	84.46	17%
25	47	Becky Hill & David Guetta Remember Polydor	UMG	8,107	20%	210	84.19	15%
26	RE	Oliver Tree & Robin Schulz Miss You Atlantic	WMG	5,897	34%	164	83.21	48%
27	NEW	Cian Ducrot I'll Be Waiting Polydor	UMG	7,096	322%	186	79.26	1466%
28	RE	The Kid Laroi & Justin Bieber Stay Def Jam/RCA	S/U	7,515	19%	175	78.71	18%
29	39	Lost Frequencies... Where Are You Now Capitol/Insanity	S/U	9,775	1%	194	76.8	-4%
30	36	Sam Smith & Kim Petras Unholy Capitol	UMG	11,666	-13%	207	73.69	-16%
31	31	Dermot Kennedy Kiss Me Island	UMG	13,534	0%	219	72.74	-20%
32	NEW	Sigala & MNEK Radio Ministry Of Sound	SME	9,649	-	202	68.94	-
33	NEW	Alma Summer Really Hurt Us Epic	SME	162	-	18	67.88	-
34	NEW	FLO Cardboard Box Island	UMG	7,099	261%	167	64.87	191%
35	NEW	LeAnn Rimes Awakening Thirty Tigers	IND.	1,310	404%	72	63.26	20%
36	NEW	Nicky Youre Eyes On You RCA	SME	2,057	209%	72	55.84	220%
37	RE	Tom Grennan All These Nights Insanity	SME	8,769	-4%	179	55.78	-4%
38	42	Venbee & Goddard Messy In Heaven Columbia	SME	6,424	-1%	129	54.1	-30%
39	NEW	Central Cee Let Go Central Cee	WMG	2,163	866%	97	53.65	1190%
40	RE	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried Interscope	UMG	9,833	-10%	221	52.32	-17%
41	NEW	Little Simz Gorilla AWAL	IND.	745	130%	32	51.3	214%
42	29	Mimi Webb Ghost Of You Epic	SME	10,163	-28%	218	50.51	-48%
43	46	Ed Sheeran Shivers Asylum	WMG	5,882	-18%	223	49.43	-33%
44	RE	Cian Ducrot All For You Polydor	UMG	6,920	0%	128	49.34	4%
45	NEW	Metro Boomin, The Weeknd & 21 Savage Creepin' Republic	UMG	3,762	1197%	119	49.3	738%
46	NEW	Romy & Fred Again.. Strong Young	IND.	1,932	35%	59	48.93	77%
47	RE	Harry Styles As It Was Columbia	SME	7,498	30%	244	48.63	4%
48	NEW	LF System Hungry (For Love) Warner	WMG	1,978	29%	128	47.14	146%
49	RE	The Weeknd Blinding Lights Republic/XO	UMG	4,814	32%	236	46.7	49%
50	NEW	Maggie Rogers Shatter Polydor	UMG	242	64%	5	46.55	248%

UK TV AIRPLAY TOP 50

TM	LM	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	TREND%	STNS
1	48	Raye Ft 070 Shake Escapism / Human Re Sources	IND.	1,029	168%	8
2	27	Oliver Tree & Robin Schulz Miss You / Atlantic	WMG	999	84%	7
3	38	Joel Corry & Tom Grennan Lionheart (Fearless) / Atlantic	WMG	955	114%	8
4	32	David Guetta & Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue) / Parlophone	WMG	759	49%	8
5	36	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero / EMI	UMG	755	60%	7
6	NEW	Bugzy Malone & TeeDee Out Of Nowhere / B-Somebody	IND.	753	130%	7
7	37	Rema &... Calm Down / Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin	UMG	748	60%	8
8	31	Anne-Marie & Aitch Psycho / Asylum/Major Tom's	WMG	740	45%	8
9	34	Stormzy Hide & Seek / 0207/Merky	UMG	733	48%	8
10	RE	Meghan Trainor Made You Look / RCA	SME	728	102%	7
11	NEW	Tiësto & Tate McRae 10:35 / Atlantic/Ministry Of Sound	WMG	717	255%	7
12	NEW	Central Cee Let Go / Central Cee	WMG	649	-	7
13	NEW	Lewis Capaldi Pointless / EMI	UMG	646	3938%	9
14	RE	Venbee & Goddard Messy In Heaven / Columbia	SME	646	92%	7
15	NEW	Nathan Dawe & Talia Mar Sweet Lies / Atlantic	WMG	609	100%	6
16	RE	Lizzo 2 Be Loved (Am I Ready) / Atlantic	WMG	582	63%	8
17	RE	Eliza Rose &... BOTA / Warner/X One House	WMG	573	72%	8
18	NEW	Sza Kill Bill / RCA/Top Dawg	SME	543	-	6
19	RE	Dermot Kennedy Kiss Me / Island	UMG	503	218%	7
20	RE	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried / Interscope	UMG	503	132%	7
21	NEW	Pink Never Gonna Not Dance Again / RCA	SME	484	82%	6
22	NEW	Stormzy Firebabe / 0207/Merky	UMG	460	25%	7
23	RE	Oxlade Ku Lo Sa / Columbia	SME	441	52%	5
24	RE	Lewis Capaldi Forget Me / EMI	UMG	423	43%	8
25	NEW	FLO Cardboard Box / Island	UMG	420	1135%	8
26	RE	Mimi Webb Ghost Of You / Epic	SME	417	70%	7
27	RE	Lil Nas X Star Walkin' (League Of Legends...) / RCA	SME	416	25%	4
28	RE	Harry Styles As It Was / Columbia	SME	400	137%	8
29	NEW	Sub Focus & Dimension Ready To Fly / EMI	UMG	380	1307%	7
30	RE	LF System Afraid To Feel / Warner	WMG	379	10%	8
31	NEW	Schak Ft Kim English Moving All... / Ministry Of Sound	SME	378	152%	6
32	NEW	Miley Cyrus Flowers / RCA	SME	366	-	8
33	NEW	Harry Styles Music For A Sushi Restaurant / Columbia	SME	365	34%	7
34	NEW	Adele I Drink Wine / Columbia	SME	348	80%	7
35	30	Rihanna Lift Me Up / Def Jam	UMG	335	-35%	7
36	RE	James Hype & Miggy Dela... Ferrari / Island/The Cross	UMG	334	56%	6
37	RE	Ed Sheeran Celestial / Asylum	WMG	324	78%	6
38	NEW	Clavish Ft D-Block Europe Rocket Science / Polydor	UMG	323	138%	7
39	NEW	Sigala & MNEK Radio / Ministry Of Sound	SME	314	-	7
40	NEW	Lil Uzi Vert Just Wanna Rock / Atlantic	WMG	300	257%	6
41	NEW	Nia Archives So Tell Me... / Island	UMG	289	1600%	6
42	RE	Lizzo About Damn Time / Atlantic	WMG	268	1%	8
43	NEW	Sam Smith, Koffee & Jessie Reyez Gimme / Capitol	UMG	264	-	7
44	RE	Beyoncé Break My Soul / Columbia/Parkwood Ent.	SME	244	27%	6
45	NEW	Metro Boomin, The Weeknd &... Creepin' / Republic	UMG	242	-	3
46	RE	Chris Brown Under The Influence / RCA	SME	238	-4%	5
47	RE	Elton John & Britney Spears Hold Me Closer / EMI/RCA	U/S	237	42%	7
48	RE	Fireboy DML & Ed... Peru / Island/YBNL Nation/Empire	U/W/IND.	234	29%	6
49	RE	Nathan Dawe Ft Ella Henderson 21 Reasons / Atlantic	WMG	218	27%	6
50	RE	Sam Fender Seventeen Going Under / Polydor	UMG	216	108%	8

EU RADIO AIRPLAY TOP 50

TM	ARTIST/TITLE		COMPANY	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	STNS	IMPACTS
1	Ed Sheeran	Celestial	Atlantic	WMG	95,044	1,361	2,153.63m
2	David Guetta & Bebe ..	I'm Good (Blue)	Parlophone	WMG	104,708	1,488	2,112.81m
3	Rosa Linn	SNAP	Columbia	SME	76,374	1,208	2,094.36m
4	Lil Nas X	STAR WALKIN (League ..	Sony Music	SME	71,223	974	1,959.57m
5	Taylor Swift	Anti-Hero	Universal Music	UMG	93,481	1,471	1,837.82m
6	Dermot Kennedy	Kiss Me	Universal Music	UMG	65,606	1,080	1,659.68m
7	Lewis Capaldi	Forget Me	Universal Music	UMG	83,103	1,279	1,566.38m
8	Pink	Never Gonna Not Danc..	Sony Music	SME	78,680	1,381	1,461.00m
9	Sam Smith feat. Kim ..	Unholy	Universal Music	UMG	74,630	1,192	1,431.95m
10	Alok, Sigala & Ellie..	All By Myself	Sony Music	SME	54,050	975	1,397.64m
11	Felix Jaehn & Ray Da..	Call It Love	Universal Music	UMG	42,466	633	1,304.69m
12	Tiësto & Tate McRae	10:35	Warner Music	WMG	62,906	1,049	1,197.00m
13	ClockClock	Someone Else	Universal Music	UMG	27,507	318	1,092.78m
14	Måneskin	The Loneliest	Sony Music	SME	35,890	800	1,087.74m
15	Elton John & Britney..	Hold Me Closer	Universal Music	UMG/S	64,841	1,507	1,079.60m
16	Meghan Trainor	Made You Look	Sony Music	SME	63,256	1,197	1,069.10m
17	Miley Cyrus	Flowers	Sony Music	SME	47,699	1,707	1,047.82m
18	Loi	Gold	VOLKSMUSIC	Ind.	29,251	488	1,029.11m
19	Metro Boomin feat. T..	Creepin'	Universal Music	UMG	36,444	729	999.30m
20	Joel Corry & Tom Gre..	Lionheart (Fearless)	Warner Music	WMG	58,214	1,004	977.32m
21	Harry Styles	As It Was	Sony Music	SME	53,179	1,794	960.97m
22	Ava Max	Million Dollar Baby	Warner Music	WMG	42,789	917	928.27m
23	MEDUZA & James Carte..	Bad Memories	Island	UMG	38,217	812	921.35m
24	Imagine Dragons	Symphony	Polydor	UMG	28,464	485	874.40m
25	Rihanna	Lift Me Up	Universal Music	UMG	28,952	807	811.26m
26	Benson Boone	In The Stars	Warner Music	WMG	19,900	367	764.20m
27	Glockenbach feat. Ásdís	Dirty Dancing	WEFOR	UMG	21,110	353	716.06m
28	Purple Disco Machine..	In The Dark	Sony Music	SME	28,522	1,042	710.15m
29	Topic x A7S	Kernkraft 400 (A Bet..	Universal Music	UMG	24,400	585	708.19m
30	Lost Frequencies, El..	Back To You	One Seven Music	SME	30,047	804	684.99m
31	Toby Romeo & Leony	Crazy Love	Kontor Records	Ind.	17,404	266	677.64m
32	Nico Santos	One Day (I'm Gonna B..	Universal Music	UMG	17,823	271	669.99m
33	ROSALÍA	DESPECHÁ	Columbia	SME	17,641	467	663.22m
34	Cat Burns	People Pleaser	Sony Music	SME	22,766	519	663.10m
35	Kamrad	I Believe	Sony Music	SME	19,936	510	659.25m
36	Tove Lo	2 Die 4	Pretty Swede	Ind.	30,039	558	656.77m
37	Michael Patrick Kell..	Wonders	SMD/Columbia De	SME	14,059	271	651.45m
38	Beyoncé	CUFF IT	Sony Music	SME	35,916	1,036	650.51m
39	Rema	Calm Down	Mavin Records	Ind.	30,273	903	647.82m
40	Harry Styles	Late Night Talking	Sony Music	SME	43,772	1,314	643.40m
41	Lady Gaga	Bloody Mary	Interscope	UMG	23,460	718	604.13m
42	Tom Gregory	Forget Somebody	Sony Music	SME	17,063	456	602.48m
43	Kid LAROI, The & Jus..	STAY	Sony Music	SME/UI	25,466	1,216	574.45m
44	Nicky Youre & Dazy	Sunroof	Sony Music	SME	24,871	657	572.35m
45	Elton John & Dua Lipa	Cold Heart	Universal Music	UMG/M	32,314	1,737	571.86m
46	Black Eyed Peas feat..	DON'T YOU WORRY	Sony Music	SME	20,115	876	556.39m
47	OneRepublic	I Ain't Worried	Universal Music	UMG	44,844	1,328	552.82m
48	Slimane	Des Milliers De Je T..	Noe Records	Ind.	11,628	143	542.57m
49	Nicky Youre	Eyes On You	Sony Music	SME	15,890	411	527.52m
50	Martin Garrix & JVKE	Hero	EPIC Amsterdam	SME	21,891	546	510.07m

ED SHEERAN

DAVID GUETTA & BEBE REXHA

ROSA LINN

LIL NAS X

TAYLOR SWIFT

STREAMING

Spotify

GLOBAL

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Sza Kill Bill
3	Bizarrap Shakira: Bzrp Music Sessions...
4	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
5	Sam Smith Unholy (Feat. Kim Petras)
6	Harry Styles As It Was
7	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
8	Manuel Turizo La Bachata
9	Arcángel La Jumpa
10	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
11	Bizarrap Quevedo: Bzrp Music Sessions...
12	Raye Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake)
13	Rema Calm Down (With Selena Gomez)
14	NewJeans Ditto
15	Jvke Golden Hour
16	Tom Odell Another Love
17	Ozuna Hey Mor
18	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried
19	D4vd Here With Me
20	The Weeknd Die For You

EUROPE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Bizarrap Shakira: Bzrp Music Sessions...
3	Central Cee Let Go
4	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
5	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
6	Sza Kill Bill
7	Raye Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake)
8	Sam Smith Unholy (Feat. Kim Petras)
9	Tom Odell Another Love
10	Oliver Tree Miss You
11	Harry Styles As It Was
12	Bizarrap Quevedo: Bzrp Music Sessions...
13	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
14	Eminem Mockingbird
15	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried
16	Miguel Sure Thing
17	Meghan Trainor Made You Look
18	Rosa Linn Snap
19	Rema Calm Down (With Selena Gomez)
20	Ayliva Sie Weiß (Feat. Mero)

UNITED KINGDOM

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Sza Kill Bill
3	Raye Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake)
4	Central Cee Let Go
5	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
6	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
7	Miguel Sure Thing
8	Sam Smith Unholy (Feat. Kim Petras)
9	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
10	Venbee Messy In Heaven
11	Bugzy Malone Out Of Nowhere
12	Harry Styles As It Was
13	Oliver Tree Miss You
14	Meghan Trainor Made You Look
15	Tom Odell Another Love
16	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried
17	Raye Escapism - Sped Up
18	Drake Rich Flex
19	Rema Calm Down (With Selena Gomez)
20	Steve Lacy Bad Habit

FRANCE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Zola Amber
2	Gazo Die
3	Maes Galactic
4	SDM Mr. Ocho
5	Maes Fetty Wap
6	Central Cee Let Go
7	Miley Cyrus Flowers
8	Favé Urus
9	RK Lola
10	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
11	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
12	Gazo Fleurs (Feat. Tiakola)
13	OneRepublic I Ain't Worried
14	Gaulois Jolie (Feat. Ninho)
15	Rosalía Despechá
16	Lil Nas X Star Walkin' (League Of...)
17	Tiakola Meuda
18	Sam Smith Unholy (Feat. Kim Petras)
19	Oliver Tree Miss You
20	Rosa Linn Snap

GERMANY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Ayliva Sie Weiß (Feat. Mero)
2	Miley Cyrus Flowers
3	Peter Fox Zukunft Pink (Feat. Inéz)
4	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
5	Central Cee Let Go
6	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
7	Luciano Bamba (feat. Aitch & BIA)
8	Raye Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake)
9	Eminem Mockingbird
10	Sam Smith Unholy (Feat. Kim Petras)
11	The Cratez Spät Nach Haus
12	Nina Chuba Glatteis
13	Nina Chuba Wildberry Lillet
14	Sza Kill Bill
15	Tom Odell Another Love
16	Milano Au Revoir
17	Southstar Miss You
18	Udo Lindenberg Komet
19	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
20	Luciano On My Way

SZA

DAVID GUETTA

MILEY CYRUS

CENTRAL CEE

RAYE

NETHERLANDS

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Maan Stiekem
2	Claude Ladada (Mon Dernier Mot)
3	Boef Probleem
4	Trobi Love Song
5	Miley Cyrus Flowers
6	Flemming Paracetamollen
7	Goldband Noodgeval
8	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
9	Central Cee Let Go
10	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)

NORWAY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Emma Steinbakken Floden
2	Isah Alt Du Vil Ha
3	Miley Cyrus Flowers
4	Arif Murakami (Åh) Tämy, Tämy – Rifla x Sheriff
5	Sza Kill Bill
6	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
7	Broiler Det Eneste Jeg Vil Er Å Ha Det Fett
8	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)
9	Raye Escapism (Feat. 070 Shake)
10	Hkeem, Makosir Danser Videre I Livet

SPAIN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Bizarrap Shakira: Bzrp Music Sessions...
2	Quevedo Playa Del Inglés
3	Arcángel La Jumpa
4	Yandel Yandel 150
5	Quevedo Punto G
6	Manuel Turizo La Bachata
7	Bizarrap Quevedo: Bzrp Music Sessions...
8	Ozuna Hey Mor
9	Quevedo Sin Señal
10	Quevedo Vista Al Mar

SWEDEN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Rasmus Gozzi Rid Mig Som En Dalahäst
2	Victor Leksell Nätterna I Göteborg
3	Miley Cyrus Flowers
4	Miss Li Hälsa Gud
5	Bolaget Kan Inte Gå
6	Central Cee Let Go
7	Sza Kill Bill
8	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
9	23 Dreams
10	David Guetta, Bebe Rexha I'm Good (Blue)

UNITED STATES

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Sza Kill Bill
2	Miley Cyrus Flowers
3	Metro Boomin Creepin' (With The Weeknd...)
4	Drake Rich Flex
5	Metro Boomin Superhero (Heroes & Villains)...
6	Lil Uzi Vert Just Wanna Rock
7	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
8	Steve Lacy Bad Habit
9	Jvke Golden Hour
10	The Weeknd Die For You

vevo

STREAMING - MUSIC VIDEO

WORLDWIDE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down
3	Yuridia, Angela Aguilar Qué Agonía
4	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For Africa)
5	Any Gabrielly Saber Quem Sou (De "Moana")
6	Rosalía Despechá
7	Feid Feliz Cumpleaños Ferxxo
8	Karol G Provenza
9	Karol G, Maldy Gatúbela
10	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From Moana/Official...)
11	Shakira, Ozuna Monotoni
12	The Weeknd Save Your Tears
13	Luis Fonsi Ft. Daddy Yankee Despacito
14	Mark Ronson Ft. Bruno Mars Uptown Funk
15	Tom Odell Another Love
16	50 Cent In Da Club
17	Harry Styles As It Was
18	Eminem Mockingbird
19	Gustavo Mioto, Mari Fernandez Eu Gosto Assim
20	Meghan Trainor Made You Look

UNITED KINGDOM

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Raye, 070 Shake Escapism
3	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down
4	Clavish Ft. D-Block Europe Rocket Science
5	Meghan Trainor Made You Look
6	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From "Moana")
7	Lewis Capaldi Forget Me
8	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For Africa)
9	Eminem Mockingbird
10	Sam Smith, Kim Petras Unholy
11	Tom Odell Another Love
12	Venbee, Goddard Messy In Heaven
13	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
14	Harry Styles As It Was
15	Ayra Starr Rush
16	Mark Ronson Ft. Bruno Mars Uptown Funk
17	French Montana Ft. Swae Lee Unforgettable
18	Carmen Twillie, Lebo M. Circle Of Life (Official Video From...)
19	Aitch, Ed Sheeran My G
20	Auli'i Cravalho How Far I'll Go (From Moana/Official Video)

UNITED STATES

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Glorilla, Cardi B Tomorrow 2
3	Chris Brown Under The Influence
4	Lil Baby California Breeze
5	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From "Moana")
6	Yuridia, Angela Aguilar Qué Agonía
7	Moneybagg Yo Ft. Glorilla On Wat U On
8	Sza Kill Bill
9	Post Malone, Swae Lee Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into The Spider...)
10	Hardy Ft. Lainey Wilson Wait In The Truck
11	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down
12	Quavo & Takeoff Hotel Lobby
13	Morgan Wallen Wasted On You (The Dangerous Sessions)
14	Lola Brooke Ft. Billy B Don't Play With It
15	Karol G Provenza
16	Sam Smith, Kim Petras Unholy
17	Lil Baby Stand On It
18	Karol G, Maldy Gatúbela
19	Mark Ronson Ft. Bruno Mars Uptown Funk
20	Chris Stapleton Tennessee Whiskey (Official Audio)

NEW ARTISTS – UK

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Raye, 070 Shake Escapism
2	Clavish Ft. D-Block Europe Rocket Science
3	Mimi Webb Red Flags
4	Belters Only Superstar
5	Valiant Dunce Cheque | Official Music Video
6	Reneé Rapp Too Well
7	Oxlade, Camila Cabello Ku Lo Sa
8	D4vd Here With Me
9	Valiant Speed Off
10	Remis Retro Panelfó Verta Milijono
11	Jessie Murph How Could You
12	Etta Marcus Smile For The Camera
13	Venbee Messy In Heaven
14	Bounce Projectz Behind These Hazel Eyes
15	A1 X J1 Man On A Mission
16	Valiant Narcissistic
17	FLO Not My Job | Vevo Dscvr Artists To...
18	Preston Pablo Ay Ay Ay
19	Valiant, Tommy Lee Sparta Guzu Bunx (Fada Rock)
20	Valiant Barbies

MILEY CYRUS

REMA

CARDI B & GLORILLA

CLAVISH

FRANCE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Maes Fetty Wap
2	Maes Galactic
3	Miley Cyrus Flowers
4	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For...)
5	Black Eyed Peas, Shakira... Don't You Worry
6	Ronisia, Gazo 200 KM/H
7	Maître Gims Ft. Niska Sapés Comme Jamais
8	Ayra Starr Rush
9	Tom Odell Another Love
10	Rosalía Despechá

GERMANY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For...)
3	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down
4	Volker Rosin Feuerwehr Gymnastik
5	Malik Harris Dreamer
6	Eminem Mockingbird
7	Tom Odell Another Love
8	Sam Smith, Kim Petras Unholy
9	50 Cent In Da Club
10	Volker Rosin Tschu Tschu Wah – Die

AUSTRALIA

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Miley Cyrus Flowers
2	Meghan Trainor Made You Look
3	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down
4	Sam Smith, Kim Petras Unholy
5	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero
6	Mark Ronson Ft. Bruno Mars Uptown Funk
7	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For...)
8	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From Moana...)
9	Katy Perry Roar
10	Harry Styles As It Was

SPAIN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Rosalía Despechá
2	Miley Cyrus Flowers
3	Shakira, Ozuna Monotonía
4	Omar Montes, Farruko Patio De La Cárcel (Tangos...)
5	Abraham Mateo, Ana Mena Quiero Decirte
6	Sangiovanni, Aitana Mariposas
7	Ana Mena, Belinda Las 12
8	India Martinez, Melendi Si Ella Supiera
9	Shakira, Rauw Alejandro Te Felicito
10	Sebastián Yatra Tacones Rojos

ITALY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Rocco Hunt, Elettra... Caramello
2	Geolier Ft. Sfera Ebbasta X Caso
3	Piccolo Coro Dell'antoniano Volevo Un Gatto Nero...
4	Geolier Ft. Lazza, Takagi... Chiagne
5	Boomdabash, Annalisa Tropicana
6	Guè, Anna, Sfera Ebbasta Cookies N' Cream
7	Geolier Money
8	Geolier Come Vuoi
9	Måneskin The Loneliest
10	Boomdabash, Eiffel 65 Heaven

TikTok Trending

INSIDE THE MOST VIRAL TRACKS OF THE MONTH

UNITED KINGDOM

The 1975

About You

Video creations: 78,900

The 1975 are all over TikTok right now, with videos of the band touring their new album Being Funny In A Foreign Language, Taylor Swift's surprise appearance during their performance at London's The O2 and Matty Healy's Chicken Shop Date with Amelia Dimoldenberg all going viral.

The band's 2022 single About You has also become popular among the TikTok community. Creators have embraced the song's nostalgic sentiment by sharing videos of special moments or posting their thoughts on relationships. The track has also been remixed, originally in a viral video leaning into Britney Spears nostalgia with a compilation of clips featuring the global star in her twenties. The track's Sped Up remix has generated over 526,000 video creations to date.

Alice Razack, artists partnerships manager at TikTok, highlighted the way that TikTok creators have embraced popular bands.

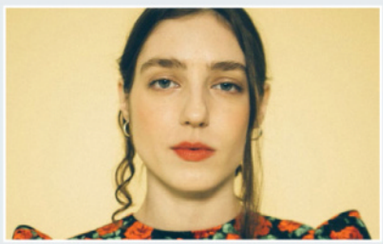
"This month's trending tracks show the TikTok community celebrating rock icons like Pink Floyd as well as the return of The 1975 with their newest record," she said. "We're seeing creators put their own unique spin on these tracks, experimenting with animation filters, sped up remixes and instrumental covers."

Pink Floyd

The Great Gig In The Sky

Video creations: 53,700

After only a year on the platform, Pink Floyd have already captured the hearts of the TikTok community with their 1973 global hit The Great Gig In The Sky, ahead of the 50th anniversary of their album The Dark Side Of The Moon. The track has taken centre stage through an animation filter, which creators use to draw their own animations as the song builds. Other TikTok users have shared their instrumental covers of the song, which the band have been reposting on their official page.



Birdy

Keeping Your Head Up – Jonas Blue Remix [Radio Edit]

Video creations: 22,300

Birdy's 2016 track Keeping Your Head Up has had a revival on TikTok as a result of a new trend where creators use the song to share the hurdles they've overcome and how they've made it to the other side. The Jonas Blue Remix [Radio Edit] version has been used by several of the platform's popular users including Kat Stickler and makeup artist Mikayla Nogueira, who has over 14 million followers. Birdy has also engaged with the original version of the song on her own channel.

GLOBAL

Libianca

People

Video creations: 807,000

The TikTok community has embraced Libianca's Afrobeats track, People. The song has driven over 700,000 video creations, with users dancing to the catchy chorus and sharing their experiences of friendships and break-ups to the lyrics, *'Did you check on me?'* The song encourages listeners to check on those who might be struggling. Libianca has also shared her own story using the track, revealing how she thought her career in music was over, but is now celebrating her biggest hit so far.

Miley Cyrus

Flowers

Video creations: 1,100,000

Miley Cyrus is a TikTok favourite. The global star has been the focus of several TikTok trends, often centring on her live covers. More recently, Flowers, the lead single from her forthcoming album, Endless Summer Vacation, has become an instant hit with TikTok audiences. Creators have been trading theories about the story behind the track, as well as using it to celebrate independence and self-love. In its first week, the track racked up over 500,000 creations on the platform and rocketed to No.1 in the UK Singles Chart.

PHOTO: Samuel Bradley

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15 years ago...

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Dressed for success

Paul McCartney talks exclusively ahead of receiving this year's Brits outstanding contribution award – see pages 15–30

EC bombshell to force term U-turn?

by Robert Ashton

The UK Government could be forced into an embarrassing about-turn following EC proposals for term extension

Pressure is mounting on the UK Government to make a U-turn on copyright extension just days before unveiling its showpiece strategy document on the creative industries.

Last week's EC bombshell to push for an extension to copyright for European performers from 50 to 95 years has put the issue of term firmly back on the Government agenda. It could even embarrass ministers into disowning the findings of 2006's Gowers Review, which controversially recommended not extending the current protection.

Gowers' report – already contradicted by the findings of the influential Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport – have now been totally undermined by EC Internal Market Commissioner Charlie McCreevy's proposal to push for extended copyright protection. He says, "I have not seen a convincing reason why... the performer should only enjoy 50 years [protection]."

Now MPs and some industry executives are predicting that the Government will have no other option than to abandon Gowers and adopt copyright extension if Brussels makes it law.

Conservative MP John Whittingdale – whose Culture Select Committee last May recommended term should be increased to "at least 70 years" – says, "There is a very strong chance it [copyright extension] will happen now."

Whittingdale adds that the issue has always been a matter for Europe because no one country could unilaterally change the law across the continent. "The change has now taken place in Europe so this is much more important than what happened here," he says.

Similarly, SNP MP Peter Wishart, who for the first time will publish proposed legislation for his Sound Recording (Copyright Term Extension Bill) Private Member's Bill at the end of this month, says McCreevy's proposal to extend term in Europe is "a bit of an embarrassment for the Government," adding, "The UK Government has an opt-out clause, but it would need a very good reason to get out of this, so it is likely to become UK law."

Wishart adds that he and others in the House of Commons will want the Government to admit they were wrong on Gowers and support McCreevy's position.

The move is a huge success for organisations such as the IFPI, BPI and PPL, which for the last year have quietly but effectively been lobbying in Brussels. The music industry will now turn its attention back to the Government, which will signpost support for the music sector this Friday when it publishes its strategy document on the creative industries (see page 3).

IFPI chairman and CEO John Kennedy says he hopes the Government will now take McCreevy's message on board and reconsider its position. He says, "There are new people around [in Government] and this is a new opportunity, so hopefully they can reach a view of their own accord."

PPL director of government affairs Dominic McGonigal also believes the momentum to change opinion in Parliament is now on the industry's side.

However, the Government department responsible for copyright does not seem quite ready to turn its back on Gowers. A spokesman for the Department of Innovation Universities and Skills says, "Any changes to that period [the 50-year term] would have to be agreed across Europe. We look forward to seeing the Commission's proposal when it is published."

robert@musicweek.com

TOP STORY

BETTER CALL PAUL

Paul McCartney graced the cover of *Music Week* as readers were treated to no less than 15 pages celebrating the brilliant career of the former Beatle. Dressed in a shirt and tie on our cover, McCartney spoke exclusively ahead of receiving the Outstanding Contribution award at the BRITs. We analysed the longevity of his career, his recent "groundbreaking" album deal with Starbucks and his "continuing passion for live performance" as part of a giant career retrospective, before a six-page Q&A with the man himself and, finally, a potted history of his solo discography and timeline of every key event in McCartney's life to date.

In our interview, as well as reflecting on the Starbucks deal ("I'm used to being sold in Best Buy and Tesco, so what's the difference, it's a shop?") McCartney spoke about the EMI sale and the idea of The Beatles making their catalogue available on DSPs (which they did in 2015).

"The big thing is iTunes and downloading... But dotting the Is and crossing the Ts sounds easier than it is," he said. "Steve Jobs is really up for it, he wants it. Everyone wants it. You've got to get it right. If we don't get it right, we sail into the future with a bum deal and, Lord knows, we've done a few of them in the past."

McCartney did, however, admit that he wasn't a downloads disciple quite yet.

"I do a bit, but I'm more CDs," he said. "I listen a lot in the car, so CDs are easiest for me."

Now 80 years old and still basking in the glow of last summer's Glastonbury headline set, McCartney remains at the heart of the industry.

COPY THAT

Amidst McCartney mania, our lead news story explored a possible government U-turn over copyright extension after the European Commission proposed to push for an increase to copyright for European performers from 50 to 95 years after the maker's death. In 2006, the Gowers Review had advised against such a move. The EU passed an extension to 70 years in 2011, which is still in place today.

Also inside... **Spirit Music Group** snapped up the rights to 300 songs by **T Rex** frontman **Marc Bolan**... **EMI Music Publishing** signed a worldwide deal with **Island** hopeful **Sam Sparro**... **Q**, **MOJO**, **The Fly** and **Uncut** posted increases in the latest **ABC** figures... **BBC Radio 1** announced plans to ramp up coverage of live music events... *Music Week* research into the nascent **USB** music market revealed it had got off to a stuttering start... **Universal** eyed a chart boost for **Amy Winehouse**'s **Back To Black** after her five **Grammy** wins... **Duffy**'s **Mercy** was the No.1 single, while **Jack Johnson**'s **Sleep Through The Static** ruled in the albums chart...

10 years ago...

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NEWS
02 Delayed devotion
A troubled HMV is seeing a boost in album sales after announcing its administration

BIG INTERVIEW
11 Bolt from the blue
Kobalt's Willard Ahdritz on why the future's bright for music rightsholders – if they're smart

rajar

ANALYSIS
14 On the Rajars
What the Q4 2012 radio numbers tell us about the vital media industry

Ministry: Save our club
MUSIC GROUP ON 'RED ALERT' AS DECISION NEARS OVER LONDON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

LIVE
BY TOM FANNING

Ministry of Sound Group CEO Lohan Presencer has issued a rallying cry to the UK music industry and a last gasp plea to Mayor Boris Johnson in the face of a proposed housing development that could close the company's iconic London nightclub.

Plans to build a 41-storey residential tower block just 10 metres from the front gate of the Ministry of Sound venue were first aired in 2009. The London club, from which a successful label spawned in 1995, fought the application for two years before a Southwark Council planning committee rejected the housing proposal unanimously in October 2011.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson, however, has since recalled the planning application and is now due to decide whether building can go ahead on February 26.

Speaking to *Music Week*, Presencer was under no illusion about what the Mayor's approval for the development would mean for the 22-year-old club.

"If it goes ahead as it stands, this will end in our closing down and if you close down our club it will impact our whole business," he said. "It will impact London and the 300,000 visitors that we bring to the capital every year, it will impact the economy and the millions of pounds in tax we contribute every year and it will absolutely impact our 200 employees and have another devastating impact on UK culture."

Presencer (*pictured*) said that with more than 5,000 people visiting the venue every week, the club was one of the most - "if not the most" - profitable nightclubs in the world and one that provided around 20% of Ministry of Sound Group's annual profit.

"The financial impact would be significant but also, the club is why we're here," he explained. "It's the reason we started and the focal point that's given us the right to do everything else that we've done over the years. It's given us the right to become the voice of dance music, it's given us the right to sell the tens of millions of albums that we've sold over the years and it's given us the right to sign and develop talent and have No.1 singles like we have at the moment."

The proposed housing development would leave open balconies and windows facing the entrance, queue and smoking area of the Ministry of Sound club. Presencer is concerned that, if future residents of the tower block complain about the noise coming from the venue, Ministry could lose its licence and be forced to close.

"We have found the developer totally unresponsive, reluctant to deal with us and just utterly convinced that the Mayor is going to wave this through," he said.

"Our appeal to the Mayor is, 'Please put the process on hold, encourage people to get around the table. Let's see if there's a way to make this work for all parties.'"

But with Boris Johnson's decision approaching at the end of the month, Ministry is preparing for the worst. "We have to stay optimistic, we have to hope that our appeals will be heard and taken seriously," Presencer told *Music Week*. "But we also have to assume that won't necessarily be the case. So we're on red alert over here and we're pulling all the levers and appealing to as many people as we possibly can to try and have our case heard properly."

Ministry of Sound has been running social media campaigns to garner support for its cause including a 'SaveMoSClub' Twitter and Facebook campaign and petition, but now Presencer is appealing to the UK music industry to launch direct action.

"If [*Music Week* readers] are influential music industry people, if they have an opportunity to get messages to the Mayor, we would encourage them to do so," he said. "We think it's for all of our benefit; for the benefit of dance music, of the music industry in London and for the music industry in the UK that a business like ours continues to survive."

Spotify headline sponsor of Music Week Awards

Spotify Streaming service Spotify has signed up as the headline sponsor for the Music Week Awards 2013.

Taking place on Thursday, April 11 at The Brewery venue in Central London, the ceremony will reward the brightest and best from the UK music industry over the past year.

There are 23 categories in all, including A&R, Manager, Live Promoter, Live Music Venue, Publisher, Distribution Team, Sales Team, Catalogue Marketing Campaign and Artist Marketing Campaign.

As ever, the prestigious Music Week Strat award will celebrate the multiple industry achievements of an industry 'legend' over the decades.

Lobbying for the Music Week Awards 2013 has now closed. The judges are whittling down each category's shortlists, which will be announced later this month. An cross-industry panel will then vote for the winners.

Will Hope, director of label relations at Spotify said: "We're excited to be sponsoring this year's Music Week Awards.

Celebrating the best of the best of the industry, the MWAs is always an important fixture on the calendar.

"2013 is lining up to be a defining year for the future of music, so this year's awards should be an evening to remember."

STING IN THE RETAIL

HMV's album sales were growing at a faster rate than the overall market, amidst the retailer's "administration woes". Album sales in the first five weeks of 2013 grew by 6.3% according to Official Charts Company data, but the numbers for specialist retailers including HMV increased by 7.3%. We put any HMV increase down to the glut of publicity and its Blue Cross sale. HMV was acquired by Hilco in April 2013 and subsequently by Canadian retailer Sunrise Records in 2019.

TOP STORY
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

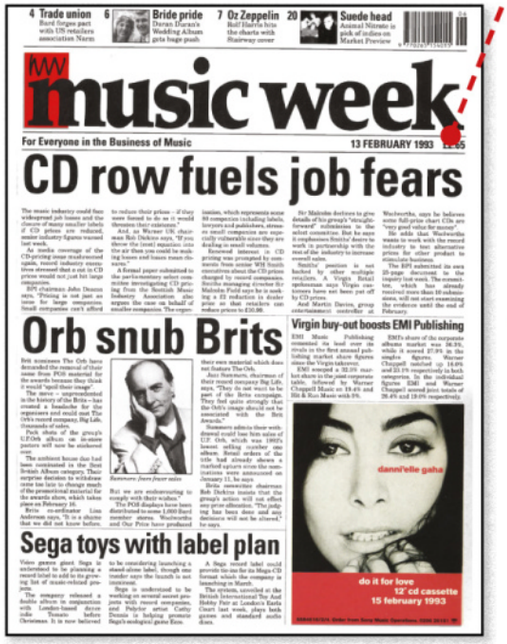
Ministry Of Sound Group CEO Lohan Presencer issued a rallying cry in our front page splash, offering a "last gasp plea" to Mayor Of London Boris Johnson in the face of a proposed housing development that threatened to close its flagship nightclub. The issue had been a hot topic since plans to build a 41-storey tower block 10 metres from the front of the club were unveiled in 2009. "If it goes ahead it will end in us closing down and if you close down our club it will impact our whole business and the 300,000 visitors we bring to London every year," Presencer said. The campaign worked: in December 2013 a deal was struck for the development to go ahead without impacting the club, which continues to thrive amidst the cranes and building work in Elephant & Castle.

STREAM EFFORT

Spotify was confirmed as the headline sponsor of the 2013 Music Week Awards, which were due to take place in April. Spotify's director of label relations Will Hope looked forward to an event that would "celebrate the best of the best in the industry" and his optimism was well-placed – that year's winners included Island, 4AD and Strat recipients Richard Griffiths and Harry Magee. The event returns for 2023 on May 24.

Also inside... **Kobalt**'s **Willard Ahdritz** opened up about his revolutionary business plan... **BBC Radio 1**'s move towards a more youthful audience was in the spotlight as the **RAJAR** numbers landed... **14th Floor** targeted US success for **Biffy Clyro**... **Adele** and **Disclosure** repped the UK in the most-played indie tracks on European radio in 2012... **Bingo Players (feat. Far East Movement)** had the No.1 single with **Get Up (Rattle)**, while **Biffy Clyro**'s **Opposites** was the No.1 album...

30 years ago...



4 Trade union
6 Bride pride
7 Oz Zeppelin
20 Suede head
music week
For Everyone in the Business of Music
13 FEBRUARY 1993
CD row fuels job fears
Orb snub Brits
Virgin buy-out boosts EMI Publishing
Sega toys with label plan

Proposed cuts in **CD prices** prompted fears of job losses across the industry... **BRIT** nominees **The Orb** demanded to be removed from any marketing material for fears of "spoiling their image", meanwhile **Levi's** and **Nike** booked prime time TV ads for the show... **Sega** was planning to launch its own record label... **EMI Music Publishing** cemented its market share lead... **Island** announced key job losses... **2 Unlimited** topped the singles chart with **No Limit**, while **The Cult** had the No.1 album with **Pure Cult**...

25 years ago...

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All-British Brits shine as BPI acts on protests
PC Wise guilty in bootlegs case
Pop puts fizz in teen titles as ABCs surge
POLYGRAM PROFITS RISE AS LEVY EXAMINES THE NET-

The BPI condemned **Chumbawumba**'s **Nigel Hunter** for throwing iced water at deputy prime minister **John Prescott** at the **BRITs**... CD manufacturer **PC Wise** was found guilty of bootlegging... **Top Of The Pops** magazine sold half a million copies for the second half of 1997... **Beach Boys** founding member **Carl Wilson** passed away... **Madonna** and **William Orbit** talked **Ray Of Light** with *Music Week*... **Céline Dion**'s **My Heart Will Go On** was the No.1 single and **The Verve**'s **Urban Hymns** was the top LP...

THE AFTERSHOW

The industry's biggest names have the last word on their life in music...

Melanie C artist

Few groups have influenced music like the **Spice Girls**, indeed the industry would be very different without their pioneering work. Here, **Melanie C** reflects on their '90s heyday, taking the solo plunge and talks reunions...

INTERVIEW: CHARLOTTE GUNN

C change: *Melanie C won the Inspirational Artist Award at the Music Week Women In Music Awards 2022*

"The Spice Girls opened doors for young female artists and we feel very proud of that"
Melanie C

PHOTO: Phillip Sinden

I've had a complicated relationship with being Sporty Spice, but I still love it...

"People sometimes say, 'Oh, which Spice Girl would you want to be if you weren't Sporty?' and the answer is none of them – I want to be me! But there was a frustration with not being seen as anything other than that. I felt like I had so much more to give than what I'd given in the band. There was more to me. So with my first solo record [1999's Northern Star], I did get a little bit frustrated. I chopped my hair off, I was a bit rebellious. I was just screaming to be seen as more than just Sporty Spice."

Going solo felt very liberating...

"Part of it was being young and the excitement of being on my own – being the voice and saying exactly what I wanted, the way I wanted to. I knew I wanted to do a pop record and that I wanted it to be quite eclectic and to toy with different genres. I was really influenced by Madonna's Ray Of Light at the time. It was such a good time working with William [Orbit] and Rick Nowels and so many people who'd worked on Madonna's records. And to have that beautiful sound – electronic and quiet ambient moments and Craig Armstrong's strings. Everyone was so nurturing and respectful to me. Nobody made me feel like an imposter and that's what helped make such a beautiful record. I listen to Northern Star every now and again and I'm just like, 'Woah!'"

As we get older, the Spice Girls are learning the need to give each other space...

"In the '90s, we would go 24/7. We were young, we were ambitious, we were under a lot of pressure, we were knackered and there were flare-ups. All bands have similar stories, but as time has gone on, we just have that real respect and appreciation for each other. Because we know without each other, we never would have achieved what we did and we wouldn't have the lives and careers that we have now, so it's quite beautiful. I love it when bands get back together after a break of five or 10 years because you know they probably appreciate it more than ever. We're still chatting [about another reunion], it's just about finding a middle ground for everybody. Will Victoria join this time? I'm an optimist, so I'll say yes!"

The '90s was a wild decade...

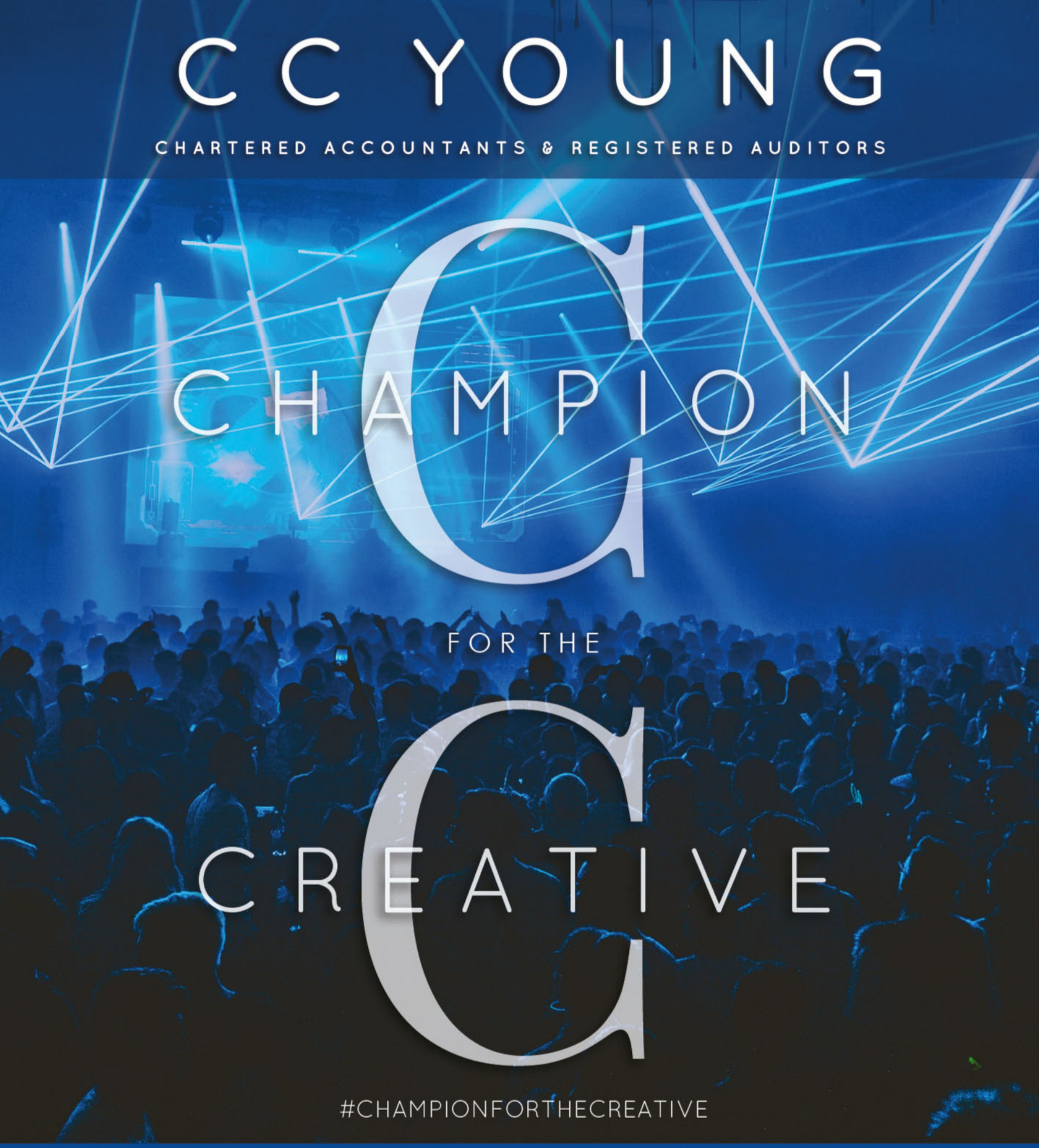
"Music was thriving and politically things were good, we had New Labour, Tony Blair was in power. And it was hedonistic! The BRITs were amazing. You never knew what would happen. I saw the Jarvis Cocker moment with Michael Jackson and we were just a couple of tables across when Chumbawamba chucked the ice bucket on John Prescott. But my number one BRITs story has to be when I asked Liam Gallagher for a fight. It was 1997, the year of Geri's Union Jack dress and it was the Spice Girls' night. He'd said in the papers, 'I'm not sure if I'm gonna go to the BRITs because if I see the Spice Girls, I'm gonna wanna slap 'em' [Gallagher later claimed the quote was 'made up' by the press]. So when we were up on stage, I said, 'Liam, come and 'ave a go if you think you're 'ard enough!'"

Remember, artists can be fragile...

"During the promotion and touring of Northern Star, I was in the depths of depression and an eating disorder and I was on medication for anxiety. But the show had to go on at the time. Any artist will tell you, cancelling a show is the hardest decision because people have saved up, worked hard, paid for the tickets, sorted out transport, hotels – all of the things that go along with a gig. But if you're not able to give the show you want to give, it's the toughest call. Whenever I see an artist cancelling a show, I feel for them, because I know what it feels like."

Courage has defined my career...

"I'm incredibly proud of the legacy the Spice Girls are creating. I truly believe we have opened many doors for young female artists and we all feel very proud of that. I probably wasn't one of the most outspoken members of the band, maybe not one of the most popular, but music is my passion. It's been about perseverance. When I did my second album [2003's Reason] with Virgin, it didn't go that well. It was around the time when people were filesharing, sales were down and the industry was starting to become quite volatile. I chose to start my own label and I feel that my courage has enabled me – although I've had ups and downs – to continue making music when it can be really, really tough."



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